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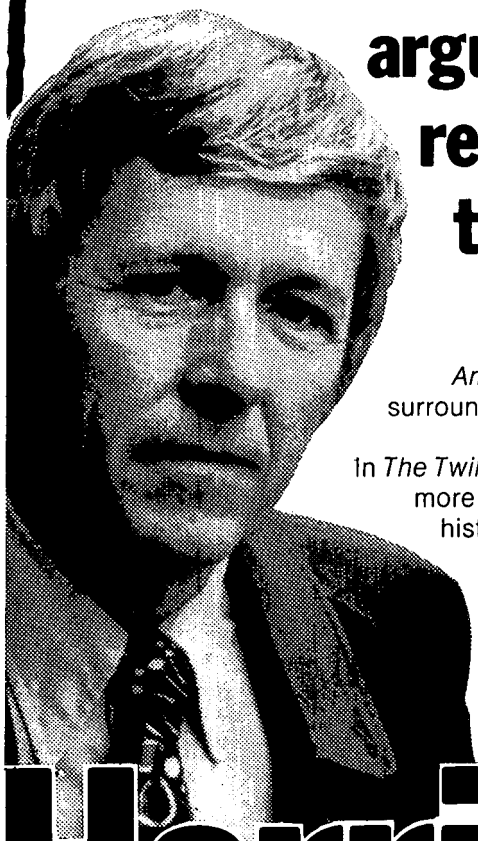

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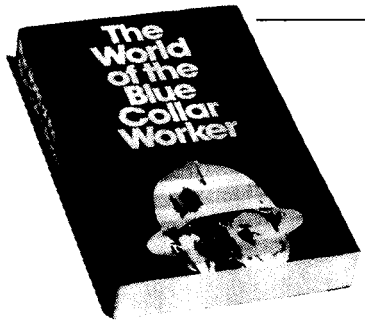

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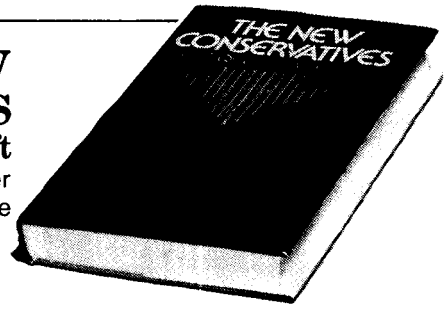

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Midway to the Election

1. Irving Howe

Since about six weeks will elapse between writing these comments and their appearance in print, it's likely that much of what we say here will be dated. Still, a few of us from *Dissent* want to put down some reflections on the political situation, which right now means, mostly, the Democratic primaries and Carter's victories. It looks, at the moment, as if Carter will win the nomination; win or lose, he represents something in American politics that is worth discussing.

But first, a few notes of caution. The primary system, no doubt better than having candidates picked by political bosses, has been shown to have major flaws. Smallish minorities can be decisive in choosing candidates; the crossover in some states creates confusion; money turns out to be even more important than in an election. Do the primaries show a turn to the right, politically? There seems to be some evidence of that, but it is much too early to be certain. The bulk of the working-class vote, which largely goes to moderate liberal candidates, does not make itself felt in primaries. It's mostly active partisans, people with distinct views, either on the right or left, who vote in the primaries. The impression is thereby created that a strong show for Reagan (like a strong show for McGovern four years ago) indicates a new political trend. Maybe it does; but maybe all it shows is that the sort of people fired up by the thought of losing the Panama Canal (there's a cause for you in the 1970s!) rush to the primaries. Less deluded people may not.

Now, Carter. Insofar as anyone tries to guess what a Carter presidency would be like, how can one know? A hope or a disaster? Where's the evidence? But if we bring to bear certain ideas about democracy—the premise, say, that a democratic society requires sustained discussion of political and socioeconomic issues—then Carter's "style" (which is pretty much his substance) becomes disquieting.

He continues an old tradition in America: *the politics of antipolitics.* A figure of measurable charm and self-proclaimed integrity announces he will throw aside those cheapjack politicians (and also, it's now obligatory to say, the Washington bureaucrats). He will restore good will, openness, and truth to government. It's an American posture, mixing a bit of Thoreau with a pinch of Gary Cooper. It claims that personal bearing matters more than political content. Sometimes it works.

But even as he persists in this worn tradition (which has the disadvantage that once a candidate wins an election he has to have some policies)—even while exploiting the antipolitical strand of American politics, Carter seems also a clever and sophisticated man, keenly attuned to the 20th century.

Watching him on TV gives one the sense that he is among the most literate candidates for President we've had in some decades. But also the sense that he has packaged himself with a remarkably shrewd appreciation of what will get across on "the media"—get across to middle-class Americans (including some black ones too). And how appallingly threadbare and impoverished is his "message": "honesty in government," attacks on "Washington bureaucrats," a startling absention

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from political or social issues. If the politics of antipolitics is what seems traditional in Carter, its slick packaging for "the media" is what seems new.

(Carter's sophisticated supporters—there are some—tell us he has a program. No doubt: hidden away among the peanuts. But the whole thrust of his public appeal has been to come forward as a man beyond "mere" program, a man who deserves to be trusted. His main program, so far, is . . . Jimmy Carter.)

Bring together, now, a sophisticated man with a contrived public face that exudes religious piety and political imprecision—isn't there reason for suspicion? We're far from the demagogy of the old southern rednecks or northern city bosses. Carter, it must be admitted, is an original: pious yet modern, uncluttered yet complicated, a thoughtful leader without thoughts.

Perhaps by July the Carter balloon will have burst. Meanwhile, some of the trade union leaders and liberal spokesmen have started switching to him. Given the way the Democratic party and the American system work, this is understandable, if not quite exemplary. The point these unionists and liberals have in mind is simply this: Carter is likely to get the nomination, his politics are little known and remain to be specified, and whichever of the competing wings of the Democratic party can exert the greatest pressures is likely to have the greatest influence upon him.

For people who work primarily in the Democratic party there may in fact be no choice but to act this way. But the one thing that might conceivably make such a course tolerable would be the continued presence of a principled criticism. What must be said first of all in such criticism is that the kind of campaign Carter has run, with its slick and barren "personalization" of politics, is inherently damaging to democratic norms. And that is not a minor criticism.

P.S. — As could have been expected, now that Carter has come close to winning the nomination (though it's still not certain he will), he is also starting to issue programmatic statements. Some people will therefore say, "Look, he does have a program." But that misses the point entirely. For the point is that instead of asking the electorate to choose him *because* of his ideas and proposals, he will now be issuing ideas and proposals *after* it has, presumably, chosen him as the candidate.

And yes, of course, this isn't unprecedented in American politics. But not many candidates in the past have pushed it quite so far.

2. Bogdan Denitch

Jimmy Carter's breakthrough occurs at a point when the general liberal retreat in the Democratic party seems to be turning into a rout. It is not merely that the liberals, with their instinct for political suicide, came into the fray scattered, too late, and with a program that didn't seem to focus on any of the basic political and social issues disturbing the Democratic electorate. Rather, it is reasonably clear that the liberals have learned almost nothing from the McGovern defeat. If anything came through clearly in the past four years, it is that the Democrats can lose only when their two major wings—the middle-class liberals and the trade union movement—are at odds. Instead of spending the past few years trying to hammer out programmatic and organizational bridges between these potential progressive allies, the liberals continued a fratricidal vendetta that resulted in no less than four liberal candidates being fielded in the early primaries. And so the middle ground in the Democratic party was abandoned to Carter and Jackson. Jackson's candidacy would have been a disaster—not only because of his rigid Cold War foreign policy, but because he would have split the Democratic party again.

Those of us who have considered Humphrey the best possible candidate *under the circumstances* did so because we saw in him a continuation of the social interventionist, Fair Deal policies at home, and a rejection of the grotesque new consensus that "less is better." But Humphrey's willingness to engage in what can only be seen as last-ditch maneuvering to stop Carter at any cost by making sympathetic noises at Governor Brown of California encourages the view that there is no principled issue separating the major candidates who have a chance at the nomination.

Why the unease about Carter? He is an outsider to the liberal and trade union establishments that have dominated the Democratic party since the '60s. It is not clear whom one calls to get close to Carter. This, while an obstacle to the party chiefs, seems to meet with approval from broad sectors of the Democratic electorate. Carter is also supposed to be vague and imprecise programmatically. To be sure, clarity has never characterized primary politics in the U.S., particularly within the

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Democratic party, but this image of Carter seems to be more a creation of the media and Carter's opponents than anything he has said or failed to say.

In foreign policy, he is at least as clear as if not clearer than any other candidate; he has committed himself to a major emphasis on rebuilding ties with Western Europe and Japan, to more attention to the Third World, the maintenance of détente combined with wariness about Soviet aims, and a $7 billion cut in the defense budget. His advisers, who include Zbigniew Brzezinski and Richard Gardner of Columbia University, are certainly not what one could call outsiders in terms of U.S. foreign policy. They represent internationalist liberalism, combined with a sophistication about Soviet aims and Western limitations.

Domestically, Carter stands in the center of Democratic party politics, committed as he is to a broad expansion of federal responsibility for welfare, the Humphrey-Hawkins bill, the Equal Rights Amendment, and a number of other measures that don't particularly distinguish him from the rest of the Democratic aspirants. What *is* different about Carter is that he is a liberal southern governor who has, for all practical purposes, wiped out Wallaceism as a force to be reckoned with in the Democratic party. Taking Wallace head-on as he did in the southern states and defeating him, defanged what was after all a malignant growth in the Democratic party both in the South and the North. And Carter's credentials here are good: he—unlike then AFL-CIO candidate Jackson—did not yield to the temptation of engaging in antibusing demgagoguery where it counted, in Boston during the Massachusetts primary race. Carter probably has the most sophisticated and articulate black political leaders in his camp or at the very least not particularly hostile to him. For a southern governor, who would certainly carry the South for the Democrats in November, that is little short of a miracle.

The classic Democratic coalition—of the South, the urban blacks, suburban liberals, trade unionists, and the poor whites—is shaping up around Carter and so perverse are some of the liberals as to consider the broadness of Carter's appeal to be an argument against his candidacy. After all, that used to be the winning coalition before the civil rights legislation of the '60s and the Republican breakthroughs in the South. The reintegration of a new South, a South with a massive black vote, a South that is increasingly industrialized, makes the Democrats again the natural majority party in the U.S.

One can speculate as to what the nature of a Carter administration would be and there I have a few educated guesses to work from. Its foreign policy will have very familiar, distressingly familiar, features: the eastern foreign policy establishment will be back in. Domestically, I suspect that this Administration will have an unprecedentedly large number of blacks in office. That alone, given the nature of the political base of black politicians today, will mean an Administration more sensitive to the urban poor and to the problems of the inner city. Beyond this, all that one can say is that the Carter administration, although far short of the optimal liberal programs of the ADA and the left trade unionists, will be an enormous improvement over the conservatism of the Ford Republicans, not to speak of the nightmarish alternative of a Reagan administration.

The unease about Carter's cultural style and his unabashed religious commitment is in good part a reflection of the insularity of the liberals who had much the same objection to John Kennedy's Catholicism. Insofar as Carter has said anything on the issues where his religious background could pose a problem, what he said is not so bad: he supports the ERA, he's against legislation that would prohibit abortion—although personally opposed to it—and he seems to be at least reasonably capable of maintaining a distinction between church and state, so much so that some hard-shelled southern Baptists have been denouncing him as a renegade. Still, inside the party, Carter's victory is a defeat for liberals. It is a defeat that brings home again the need for American liberalism to organize and to retool programmatically for an era in which the old slogans and programs no longer seem to catch fire. It is also a defeat, however, for those who have overestimated the extent of a drift to the right in American politics.

For democratic socialists, the Carter candidacy would restate a lesson that seems at times to have been lost: there *is* a great difference between socialists and the mainline active Democratic voters. The Democratic party is far from being a labor or social democratic party in disguise. At best it is one more arena in which socialist politics and socialist alternatives can be argued. However, before belaboring the liberals for a lack of concrete political strategies and programs, socialists have to do some serious thinking about what is possible in

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American politics today. Perhaps we were too involved in the internal politicking of the Democratic party—involved vicariously and emotionally, forgetting that the good guys were really not all that good, and that our allies are for the time being a small minority.

3. David Bensman and Luther Carpenter

The Carter victory is not altogether disastrous—it eliminated Wallace as a national force—but it is bad enough. Regardless of whether Carter is elected, left-wing forces in the Democratic party, including progressive and mainstream trade unions as well as middle-class liberals, suffered an unprecedented defeat that will take years of organizational efforts to overcome. (It was always clear that liberals and labor would fail if they did not unite, but Republicans were supposed to benefit, not another Democrat.)

If the losers are easily identifiable, the victors are less so. Carter's triumph was based on a media appeal to the masses rather than on a concentrated organizational effort. Survey data indicate that the Governor's chief early appeal was to voters who had previously exercised little national political power—the less-affluent suburbanites, workers not strongly identified with labor's leadership, and to two organized groups that have achieved only partial recognition: the southern moderate Democratic establishment and blacks.

Carter's ability to draw both black and antibusing votes symbolizes his political technique: a studied insistence on avoiding to stir up divisions among interest groups. Carter does not reject any group; consequently, widely different people can feel they are winning with him. In other times, such an approach would fail, but it succeeds now that Presidents Nixon and Ford have destroyed Americans' expectations. The "black issue" is dead. Blacks have been put in their place by suburbanization and depression; antibusing voters know Carter won't challenge that. Blacks are left to respond to other sides of Carter. Many black politicians act as immigrant ward heelers used to; they reward past favors instead of future promises, recognizing that the former Governor appointed blacks to state office. The black masses, with little to lose, respond to cultural and religious appeals.

This technique may become a dominant political style in the coming years. Carter was playing to a "lonely crowd" instead of creating a coalition. He allows his disparate audience to feel that their existence is recognized and even approved; but he does not relate these audiences to each other. He keeps them so separate that they do not recognize the competition they are in. Nor is Carter building an LBJ "consensus," because "consensus" tried to force Americans to unite around the twin crusade against Communism and poverty. Carter does not require unity. He asks no one to change his or her behavior. His style mirrors America's plurality and may give it lasting expression. We listen to Carter as we listen to the car radio. Song follows song, and we only pay attention when our favorite tune is played.

On the whole, Carter's appeal is more cultural and personal than social or ideological. In retrospect, the country-western music craze and the growing social conservatism among the black leadership may be seen as having foreshadowed the triumph of "reborn Christianity," antiurban moralism, and the work and business ethics Carter represents. Carter resembles the candidate in Altman's film *Nashville,* and although New York voters, and intellectuals particularly, fear Carter because he is alien to them, he is familiar to millions more.

At the same time, Carter's media strategy, his smile and platitudinous talk, encouraged people to project on him their hopes and needs, just as intellectuals projected their fears on him. Carter followed President Ford's post-Watergate script, and played the role better than Ford himself.

It may be difficult to forge a majority out of this welter of images, secondary establishments, and disaffected individuals, for American culture itself is too fragmented. Just as George McGovern's suburban rock-music antiwar coalition fell short of a majority in 1972, Carter's hymn-singing country-music ensemble may prove to be too narrow. Country music is sweeping through Catholic working-class areas, but Carter's success there may be more ephemeral. And his support from less affluent suburbanites may not translate into support from suburbanites as a whole. The success of Governor Brown and Senator Church in late primaries suggests that the low-intensity bonds

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keeping together the elements of Carter's *ad hoc* plurality can be easily severed. Moreover, Carter's early supporters may drift away as their antiestablishment candidate woos the Democratic leadership.

These are matters of image, not of program. Liberals and leftists naturally doubt that Carter's images can stand on their own in defiance of reality and the genuine conflicts built into economic issues. Jimmy Carter is no peanut farmer—or, if he is, he's of the agribusiness variety. Although Carter's triumph was not ideological, his candidacy represents modern corporate liberalism—of a less developed sort than Rockefeller's, perhaps, but a less backward version than that of President Ford. As president, Carter would seek to achieve full employment—by which he means 4.5 percent unemployment, or 9 percent unemployment in real terms—by fiscal and monetary stimulus of the private sector. Like Ford, Carter does not favor the government as employer of first, or last, resort. To make federal stimulus of the economy effective, Carter would make the chairmanship of the Federal Reserve Board an appointive post, appointed by the president. That is a fairly radical step toward government economic management, though it certainly need not be a progressive one. On energy, Carter—like Ford, Jackson, and Rockefeller—favors government support of the oil companies, subsidizing their profits and assuming their risks by underwriting research and development costs.

Such a program cannot solve our problems of jobs, housing, and energy. President Carter's "lonely crowd," like Nixon's "silent majority," ought to dissolve when conflicts resume over the distribution of goods and services. But America will remain vulnerable to the pseudopopulist appeal of Reagan, Wallace, and Carter as long as the liberal-labor forces are unable to create viable political communities and fail to mobilize the emotional energies of the masses of the American people. Since the assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr., we have made remarkably little progress in that direction.

To Our Contributors

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4. H. Brand

It is hard to see why socialists should support Carter for the Democratic presidential candidacy, or for president if nominated. Carter has evidenced much quasi-religious fervor in stressing decency and honesty in government, but he has shown no passion whatever for social justice, for the elimination of poverty, for the radical reduction of military expenditures and the threat they pose to peace and progressive economic development. He has yet to take issue with our deep inequalities in income and wealth and give rise to forms of apartheid. He has abstained from analyzing, let alone attacking, the roots of these inequalities in either the corporate system or the government policies deliberately pursued these past eight years.

Most significant perhaps, he has adopted an altogether negative position on the most crucial internal problem facing the country, *the future of its cities*. Unemployment, poverty, social inequality are all tied to an evolving structure of industries and technologies that, unless planfully controlled and channeled, spells the ruination of the cities, the continued degradation of many of their people. Carter has had nothing substantive to say about this problem of problems, displaying a vast ignorance of it. In the case of New York he has referred tritely to its "fiscal irresponsibility," not bothering to define what that meant; and he has proposed a federally underwritten insurance scheme for municipal bonds, a minor reform that would protect investors. As he becomes exposed to broader leadership circles, Carter will "learn" and amend his position, but his basically conservative stance is unlikely to change, for his electoral strength derives from it.

At least Humphrey had some sense of needs. His "Marshall Plan" for the cities, while vague, was generous. It would probably not have worked because Humphrey did not envision structural changes, e.g., a shift in the power to make investment decisions along lines beneficial to cities and their people. Without such changes, major reforms are subverted. Humphrey, a man of good will, probably never saw the problem that way, and would have lacked the hard will to tackle it if he had. Carter altogether lacks social vision, and where Humphrey was at least restless about the status quo, Carter's electoral strategy caters to it.

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Humphrey believed that the primaries would result in deadlock, giving him the chance at his party's nomination for the presidency. It may well be that the roots of his miscalculation lie in changes in the social base of the Democratic party; it is too early to say. The worker or middle-class professional residing in the suburbs is likely to be more interested in preserving what he has—job, home, a reasonably good life—than in solidarity with those in the inner cities. Cutbacks in defense spending are more likely to stir apprehension about his economic security than approval. Carter's appeal to love and Christian morality imparts a sort of righteousness to achieved status, the more so since the achievement seems forever threatened by rising prices and rising taxes.

Reinhold Niebuhr, quoted by Arthur Schlesinger in the *Wall Street Journal* (April 28), wrote that "Religion is more frequently a source of confusion than of light in the political realm"—but this is a charitable use of the passage: Carter is *using* religion to gain the presidency. Niebuhr also wrote that "American Christianity tends to be irrelevant to the problems of justice because it persists in presenting the law of love as a simple solution for every communal problem." The introduction of Christianity into the campaign is not just irrelevant to problems of justice, it obfuscates them. It also tends to elevate the status quo to a religiously willed element of the community for which all yearn, and to which yearning Carter appeals with considerable emotional power.

The reasons for the breadth of support Carter enjoys are known, and I need not recite them. One can, however, characterize them as apolitical, a wish for "leadership" and "unity" under a charismatic leader. True, the wish has always been there, but rarely has a politician emerged who fitted it. Whether Carter will prove capable of fulfilling the role in which a large part of the electorate is casting him, and to which he evidently aspires, cannot be foretold. If he does, then he will be far less subject to the ordinary pressures of politics on which many leading spokesmen now jumping on his bandwagon count. He will probably turn out to be an "activist" president but his activism will bear the stamp of the first-term presidency of Richard Nixon. Wrongly billed by some as a "populist," he will *not* be a continuator of the traditions of the Democratic party initiated by Roosevelt—traditions that opened up possibilities for social justice and that Humphrey would have made efforts to safeguard. □

Michael Walzer

Israeli Policy and the West Bank

June 1

The municipal elections held on the Israeli-occupied West Bank this April resulted in a decisive victory for a new generation of Palestinian nationalists. In town after town, the enlarged electorate (including women for the first time) turned out in record numbers and voted out the traditional leadership, the old notables whose authority dates back to Jordanian, British, and even Turkish times. These results were not entirely surprising, given the economic and political changes on the West Bank since 1967, but they make for a strange and striking situation.

- In Jordan, where a majority of the people are Palestinians, every expression of Palestinian nationalism is brutally repressed.
- In Syria, Palestinian politics is rigidly controlled; Sa'iqa, the terrorist group, and the Palestine Liberation Army are both in effect organs of the Syrian regime, their leaders handpicked, unable to act independently.
- In Lebanon, the PLO operates without restraint (and intervenes on a large scale in the Lebanese civil war), but its various member groups exist by virtue of the force they can muster and divide the refugee camps by mutual agreement: even where they have most room for maneuver, they have not constituted themselves as representative organizations.
- Only on the West Bank, under military occupation, is there a freely elected Palestinian leadership genuinely responsible to its own people.

The elections were by no means a simple PLO triumph. West Bank politics is complicated, and both the Baathists and the Communists did well in certain towns. How closely these three groups can work together is uncertain; in Lebanon, they have come into sharp and sometimes deadly conflict. But for the moment they are united in opposition to Israeli rule, and that opposition, newly legitimated by the Israeli-run elections, will make the occupation more and more difficult. Already tension has

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increased on the West Bank, after years of relative quiet. This is due partly to the provocations of Israeli rightists, but even more to the new sense among the Arabs that they have found their own voice. There's also a new sense among local politicians that only hostility to the military authorities will make possible a political career later on.

The Israelis have in effect created the Palestinian "entity" they fear so much. It can't easily be said anymore that they are simply holding a piece of Jordanian territory, as they are holding Egyptian territory, pending a peace settlement. And while Jordanian patriotism made little trouble, Palestinian nationalism will make a great deal more. So long as the occupation lasts, nationalist feeling will intensify and with it the sullen hatred that already frightens, bewilders, and angers the young Israeli soldiers who must deal with it every day. However liberal Israeli rule is, or precisely because of its liberality, there are certain to be periodic eruptions like the March riots, and these will require repressive measures. For all these reasons, the occupation has now become a political and moral liability. It has not been without its costs all along, of course, both to Israeli society and to Israel's standing in the world, but these are far greater now; they must be recognized and dealt with.

At the same time, giving up the West Bank would involve major strategic risks, and no friend of Israel can recommend it without turning immediately to the concessions the Israelis would have to ask (have a right to ask) in return—not only from whatever political leadership takes over in Nablus, Hebron, and East Jerusalem but also, and more important, from the surrounding Arab states. For after a withdrawal, Israel would once again be all border, with no possibility of defense except by preemptive attack, as in 1967. Though much of the world seems to regard the Israeli occupation as the major source of Middle East tension, it is well to remember that the occupation followed upon 20 years of war, guerrilla war, blockade, and terrorism. Throughout that time, and ever since, the central issue has been the very existence of Israel. Therefore Arab recognition of Israeli sovereignty is the first prerequisite of Israeli withdrawal. Then there must be an agreement to demilitarize the West Bank and to set up surveillance and control arrangements that both sides can regard as stable and safe. And then there must be the beginnings at least of normal relations, political and commercial. These are roughly the terms advocated by the Israeli left for a return to the pre-'67 lines, and they are sensible enough. But a settlement on these terms is not likely in the immediate future (and demilitarization is particularly problematic if the West Bank is to be constituted as an independent state). It is easy to design scenarios of peace, especially when the scene is so empty of real prospects; it isn't easy at all, given the actual situation, to answer the question, what is to be done *now*?

ISRAEL IS CAUGHT between the liabilities of holding the West Bank and the liabilities of giving it up. It is a situation that makes for immobility and fear—the hallmarks of the present government. And it has opened new opportunities for the Israeli right, whose leaders are insensitive to the difficulties of the occupation and favor a quick resolution of the strategic problem. Hence the new pressure to settle and annex the West Bank. Hence also the dangerous alliance of rightist and ultra-orthodox religious forces. This alliance is a new factor in both Jewish and Israeli life, for right-wing Zionists, like the leftists, were always secular in their political commitments. The nationalism of the right, unattractive as it was, was never an integral nationalism; it had no traditions; its creed was strange and its symbols were alien to most Jews. Now the right reaches out to that small group of religious zealots who call themselves the "Faithful" and through them to the established religious parties. The alliance is still incomplete; the zealots, by their defiance of Israeli law, have aroused much resentment and hostility; perhaps by the time this article appears in print the government will have rallied support against them. But the dilemma of the occupation breeds and will continue to breed this sort of nationalism, as dangerous to Israel's future as is the nationalism of the PLO.

Even the decisive defeat of the rightist-religious forces, however, would not solve the dilemma. The Israelis cannot solve it by themselves, for it is not of their own making. All they can do, and what they have to do, is to hold open the possibilities of a future solution. This means that they should neither settle nor annex the West Bank. It means that the government must commit itself now to a future withdrawal. Indeed, withdrawal should be its goal, not some bitter pill it expects the great powers will one day make it swallow, but a central feature (and a well-publicized feature) of its own plan for peace. This is what Levi Eshkol, then prime minister, called for in the immediate aftermath of the Six-Day War. The years of continued struggle and unremitting hostility have

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since dulled the optimism he no doubt felt, but his policy was and is the right one. Paradoxically, it is the only one compatible with even a short-run maintenance of the occupation.

The occupation will be hard in any case, but it is defensible so long as it is clearly seen to be temporary. Waiting for a settlement, the Rabin government can set itself two goals: first, that military rule be recognized as an expedient to which no one, Arab or Jew, need be committed and by which no one need be compromised; second, that the prospect of withdrawal be linked with that of peace, so that it does not appear to the Arabs as the first triumph of an irredentist nationalism or to the Jews as a national defeat and disaster. Right now, these goals require a major political fight within Israel. The Israelis have understandably avoided this fight, feeling harassed and threatened enough by external enemies. But it is not avoidable now. The annexationists must be defeated, if not for the sake of peace, which Israel will still be waiting for when the fight is over, then for the sake of moral and political strength during the long wait. □

Simon Leys

Behind the Turmoil in China

The following comment on recent political events in China comes from the pen of an Australian authority on Chinese culture and politics who writes under the pen name of Simon Leys. It first appeared in The Australian. *In our next issue we will publish a major study of Chinese society today by the same author.*
—EDS.

At the end of 1974, three young revolutionaries posted on the walls of a busy street of Kwangchow a long and powerful political manifesto. Before it could be suppressed by the authorities, it was immediately reproduced and disseminated by way of Chinese-style *Samizdat,* and it rocked the whole country.

Had Western observers paid more attention at the time to this historical document—a spontaneous expression of the masses—instead of focusing on the permanent power struggle waged between a handful of top bureaucrats, the recent riots in Peking would not have taken them so much by surprise.

This manifesto was entitled "On Socialist Democracy and Legality" and signed Li Yi-che—pen name of its three authors, Li Chengt'ien, Ch'en Yi-yang, and Huang Hsi-che. It constitutes one of the most sophisticated and penetrating analyses of the Chinese political scene ever attempted from inside China.

It takes as its starting point the Criticism of Lin Piao, which had been the theme of a huge campaign for the past few years. The authors observe that the campaign had so far remained largely sterile and empty, since it concentrated on beating a dead horse: what is the use of merely denouncing an *individual*?

What matters, in fact, is not the person of Lin Piao, but the "Lin Piao System," the mechanism by which such a traitor could be propelled to the top, be proclaimed the "closest comrade-in-arms and successor of Chairman Mao," and wield practically absolute power in China for nearly four years (1968-71).

The "victory" of the Cultural Revolution, as the authors see it, must be a myth, since Lin Piao, having usurped power half-way through it, then proceeded to crush all revolutionary activity in order to stage his own apotheosis—the Ninth Party Congress (1969), which anointed him in the exalted dignity of heir-designate and even went to such ludicrous lengths as to enshrine his new status in the revised party constitution.

In other words, for four years, China had been under the rule of a fascist military adventurer! What such rule entailed, the manifesto continues, 800 million witnesses can testify: bloody suppression of the masses (the Lin Piao military repression in Kwangtung province alone, they state, had 40,000 victims), imposition of a new "religion" with a ritualistic blind devotion to the Supreme Leader, arbitrary dogmas requiring unconditional obedience, and substitution of a feudal rule of ideology for the socialist rule of law.

WHAT IS frightening, continue the authors of the manifesto, is that the downfall of Lin Piao has not led to the end of the "Lin Piao System"—the system that brought him to power continues to operate as before. Witness all the successive political campaigns that have rocked the Chinese scene in the past few years, and in particular the "anti-

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restoration" movement (which at that time was already aiming at Teng Hsiao-peng and now, as we know, has culminated in his downfall). They were all dealing with events and were directed against personalities belonging to the post-Lin Piao era. They never attempted to challenge seriously any of the institutions or personalities established during Lin's heyday, 1968-71.

It is precisely this "social-fascist dictatorship of a feudal type" that presents the greatest danger for the Chinese proletariat. As the authors recall, such an eventuality had already been foreseen by Mao Tse-tung ten years previously: "Should such a restoration ever happen in our country, it will not amount to a simple dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, but it will be a reactionary-fascist type of dictatorship."

Mao predicted that, after the victory of the revolution, the class struggle would remain a permanent reality inside the socialist regime. The danger of a bourgeois restoration no longer comes, of course, from the wretched descendants of the former bourgeoisie who are utterly discredited, powerless, bypassed by history, and constitute but a tiny minority of pathetic scarecrows; the U.S.S.R., they point out, is under a bourgeois-revisionist regime, yet Brezhnev did not invite white Russians and former landowners to come back and share his cake!

The danger of a bourgeois restoration comes from the *new* bourgeoisie. Here Li Yi-che's analysis is remarkably similar to that of Yugoslavia's Djilas, and this should not surprise us. Like causes produce like effects, and in the framework of bureaucratic totalitarianism, variations are necessarily limited. Within the limits of a socialist economy, the new ruling class has managed to privately appropriate and embezzle the wealth of the community.

This is achieved by inflating and expanding its special status by increasing its various political, economic, and social privileges, by making these privileges quasi-hereditary, and by consolidating and protecting them through a system of sectarian oligarchical cliques able to suppress whatever criticism might arise from among the masses.

Confronting the abuses of this "new ruling class" and the menace of a "social-fascist dictatorship," the proletariat has but one weapon: the Cultural Revolution. The original purpose of the Cultural Revolution had been not so much to overthrow Liu Shao-chi, as to train the masses in the actual exercise of democracy.

The emancipation of the people can be achieved only by the people itself. For a period at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, the masses were able to control their own destiny. For the first time since the foundation of the People's Republic all the rights and liberties guaranteed to citizens by the constitution were fully put into effect: freedom of opinion, of the press, of meetings, of association, of movement . . . but it did not last long.

Lin Piao's usurpation brought all this to a brutal halt in 1968. What is needed now—and here the authors of the manifesto address themselves most emphatically to the Fourth People's Congress whose convocation was then imminent—is to set a new constitutional basis for the regime, which would ensure "socialist democracy and legality." Such demands for "democracy" were usually seen in the past as an indication of reactionary leanings.

The constitution should enable the masses to exert constant control over the state apparatus, and the masses should have the right to revoke at any time any party or government leader who loses their trust. The human rights and civic freedoms, which in the past, though guaranteed by the 1954 constitution, were constantly violated (arbitrary arrests, trials on trumped-up charges, torture, executions for political crimes) should be reaffirmed and effectively enforced.

MOST IMPORTANT of all is the freedom of opinion: without free criticism from the people, there can be no true political life, no participation of the masses, no socialist democracy.

The authors movingly conclude:

> We are young men, we may still lack theoretical knowledge, yet we are not entirely without experience; we are not afraid of the tiger; we know the beast. It has already bitten us once, but did not succeed in swallowing us.

Li Cheng-tien, the main editor of the manifesto, had been one of the leaders of a leftist revolutionary group during the Cultural Revolution and was jailed for more than a year at the time of the Lin Piao military repression. He, with the others, expresses his faith in the ability of the masses to ultimately get rid of the "Lin Piao System," which continues to rule China under another name.

One month after the appearance of this manifesto, the answer of the Maoist establishment was expressed in the convening of the Fourth

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People's Congress and the adoption of a new constitution. This new constitution gave official sanction to the dramatic turn toward a reinforced totalitarianism. Most of the human rights and civic freedoms guaranteed by the 1954 constitution were abolished and, most important of all, a new article was added allowing the Public Security (the political police) to make arrests without the authorization of a people's court or a people's prosecutor—in other words, the arbitrary power of the police has been enshrined in the constitution.

It is in this light that we must look at the recent events in Peking. From what we know at this stage, a huge crowd gathered spontaneously chanting slogans and expressing its devotion to the memory of Chou En-lai—who, it is to be recalled, in his last years had become more and more conscious of the necessity to substitute a code of laws for the increasingly erratic and subjective ideological rule of the "Supreme Leader."

The crowd freely vented its hatred for the Public Security organs (political police).

The second day, the huge Tien-An Men Square was cordoned off by the Security men and the Army in order to prevent further spontaneous demonstrations, and to wash and scrape away all the inscriptions left by the demonstrators, thus in effect robbing them of this basic right—guaranteed by the constitution—of posting "big character inscriptions," which was in fact the sole democratic weapon left to them.

Then came the announcement that Hua Kuo-feng had been officially confirmed as Premier. Hua Kuo-feng, who happens also to be the head of the Public Security. No one could be better qualified for the role of leader in a "social-fascist dictatorship of feudal type." Predictably enough, huge state-managed demonstrations of dutiful schoolchildren, mobilized civil servants, and factory workers marching in good order, mouthing ready-made slogans, are now being organized everywhere in the country to celebrate the promotion of the new Lin Piao.

In the short perspective, the situation looks utterly depressing. Yet, in the long run, we would perhaps be foolish to despair.

If one has faith in the people's ability to finally overcome, no people could better justify such faith than the Chinese, since no other people on this planet has succeeded in constantly maintaining against tremendous odds a more durable and richer set of human values in the obstinate fight that we call civilization. □

Kenneth Maxwell

Portugal: Problems Old & New

For Portugal the analogies were almost always wrong. It was not Czechoslovakia in 1948. Throughout 1974 and into mid-1975, the Communists held many of the key positions of power: in the government, the local administration, the unions, the press, and they also seemed to have the support of key elements in the army. Yet, during that critical period, Cunhal was sweet reasonableness. After all the PCP, not the PCI, was the first West European Communist Party, in October 1974, to repudiate the phrase "the dictatorship of the proletariat." Cunhal's critics to the left at the time called him a "social fascist"; he talked like a reformer, he behaved like an authoritarian.

Cunhal indeed could have seized power; he possessed the means. He did not do so because he feared Portugal was Chile. But Portugal was no more Chile than it was Czechoslovakia. The right was muted, wounded, waiting, yet it did not have the strength to impose its will. There had been after all a revolution of sorts; the bases of power of the old oligarchy—in the great industrial and banking monopolies and the landed estates in the south—had been destroyed. After March 1975, the banks, insurance companies, and much of industry were in the hands of the state. The army could not act for the right; it was too fragmented and, until November 1975, dominated by its leftist elements. When attempts at countercoups were made, in September 1974 and March 1975, the left was too strong, too united to be broken—and the right was routed.

But appearances in Portugal are deceptive. While most expected revolution and some counterrevolution, what emerged was the most unlikely hybrid of all: social democracy. That at least has been decided, embodied in a Constitution and legitimized by two successive national elections. Thus, after two turbulent years the parameters have been at last established. The question now is, can social democracy work?

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PORTUGAL'S FIRST DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT faces enormous problems that are threefold: political, economic, and military.

• In the political realm, the two elections, for the Constituent Assembly on April 25, 1975, and for the Assembly of the Republic on April 25, 1976, revealed a remarkable stability of voting patterns—remarkable because the context within which the elections were held had totally changed. In April 1975, the radical military leadership closely allied to the PCP was in the ascendancy. In April 1976 the radical left had been deposed and the colonels who had defeated them on November 25 held the reins of power. The army, which last year talked of itself as "a revolutionary vanguard" and a "movement of national liberation," this year praised "hierarchy" and "discipline." But despite this dramatic reversal of circumstances, the Socialist party again gained a clear plurality. There was a slight falloff in support (36 percent as to 38 percent a year before). Yet the Socialists remained the only party with broad based national support. They had established themselves as the key element in any political equation.

The election returns, however, make the formation of a viable government majority in the national assembly extremely difficult. It is clear now that no general coalition can function long without the Socialists. Neither can the parties on the right, the Popular Democrats (with 24 percent of the vote) and the Social Democratic Center (with 16 percent) form a majority of the right. Nor is it likely that the PCP, which has increased its vote (from 12 to 15 percent), will join a majority coalition with the anti-Communist Popular Democrats and Social Democratic Center against the Socialists, though a tactical alliance on individual issues is not impossible.

The two alternatives to a minority Socialist government—a coalition to the left with the PCP, or a coalition to the right with the Popular Democrats, both viable majorities in the Assembly—present major domestic and international complications. An alliance with the PCP will be strenuously opposed by Washington and the West Germans, whose active support for the floundering economy is increasingly essential. A coalition with the Popular Democrats (long-time supporters of a liberal capitalist solution to Portugal's economic problems), a party by no means committed to nationalizations and land reform, would almost inevitably risk confrontation with organized labor and the Communist-dominated rural areas of the south. And each coalition would run the risk of causing splits within the Socialist party, since there are strong and articulate right and left wings, often at loggerheads and only tenuously mediated by Mario Soares's personal leadership. All of this leaves political options confused and gives added emphasis to the presidential contest scheduled for June. Since the presidency under the constitution is the lynchpin of the new system, the struggle for that pivotal position has reentered the realm of civilian-military and intramilitary factionalism.

• The solution of many of Portugal's economic problems will require major political decisions, and these also could provoke major divergences between the parties, especially between the Popular Democrats and the Communists. Each of these parties represents a clearly defined regional constituency with differing and sometimes conflicting interests.

Most critical perhaps, though least discussed, is the rural crisis. In the south there are chaotic conditions in the wake of often preemptive seizures of large estates by Communist-led landless workers. Practical problems abound and require government action. There is great need for irrigation, the organization of distribution, for fertilizers, technical assistance, the planning for improved crop yields, and the replacement of lost breeding stock. But in the center and the north of the country the small landowners are terrified of the spread of the expropriations that took place in the south. It was these small and medium proprietors who formed the backbone of last summer's violent anti-Communist riots. But some reforms are essential here too and will in time have to be faced. The average farm holding in the north is only 2 hectares, and in the center 3.5 hectares. With Western Europe no longer absorbing Portuguese immigrants, most of whom came from these regions, dangerous population pressure could build up.

In the industrial sector, fundamental and possibly painful measures are no less pressing. With the end of its empire, Portugal's traditional industries—cotton and woolen textiles—lost both their cheap raw materials and protected markets. The old textile mills were regarded as antiquated and undercapitalized before the crisis broke, and now their outlook is even bleaker. But these factories employ some 200,000 workers. And there are already some 400,000 to 500,000 men and women without jobs. The modern industrial sector,

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developed in the 1960s, was based on oil, petrochemicals, and motor vehicle assembly plants (with U.S., West European, and Japanese ownership). These new enterprises are now buffeted by the inflation in oil prices and the changed social conditions in Portugal. In large part their economic viability was predicated on an expanding and prosperous middle-class consumer. But if such a path is to be followed again, it is difficult to see how it will work without whittling away the gains of the industrial workers who have so far been the main beneficiaries of the changes set in motion after April 25, 1974. On top of these grave maladjustments there now are some 600,000 refugee settlers from the former colonies, living on state handouts. It seems implausible that a country of some 8.5 million people can easily absorb such a burden. But it is there and must be faced.

• The final problem, no less grave, lies with the military, which remains a potent political force in Portuguese affairs. It is by no means certain how in the long run the military would react to a failure to solve the accumulating political and economic problems that face the country. The revolutionary council, although absorbed in effect into the General Staff, retains key powers, including a veto or "review" over the "constitutionality" of actions by the National Assembly. This residual power is a built-in justification for future military intervention into the country's political life.

The November 1975 "victory" of the colonels is no more secure than that of the Gonçalvistas nine months before. The problem in part lies in the manner in which victory is won. The technique lies in mustering irresistible power while avoiding confrontation. Those who win are those who through maneuver, intrigue, and sometimes sheer bluff provoke their opponents into premature action. There is some genius to the process, but it does have its drawbacks.

Above all, it perpetuates partial solutions under the appearance of dramatic reversals. Personalities change, reputations rise and fall, activists disappear or reemerge from political prisons, but beyond that, transformation is more verbal than real. In fact, the settlements among the military factions are bound to be cosmetic, achieved by temporary coalitions formed to oppose a threat that, once overcome, simultaneously removes their reason for being. Already the coalition of "operationals" and those democratic socialist officers that coalesced around Major Melo Antunes to bring Col. Vasco Gonçalves down last summer is badly split. Meanwhile, the members of the military right are more confident than ever. They have never abandoned hope for a comeback and regard the whole constitutional settlement as a "Marxist" plot. Again, as on the political and the economic fronts, Portugal's problems within the military are far from over.

The coming months, therefore, will be the most critical time for democracy in Portugal. The test, far from being over, has just begun. □

Frank Calzon

How Many Prisoners Does Castro Hold?

> ...A triumphant revolution has to use repression because with its triumph the class struggle does not end....We have no mercy for those who take weapons against us; it does not matter if they are weapons of destruction or ideological weapons....
> —Ernesto Guevara, *El Mundo* (Havana), October 1, 1963

Among those who have studied the Cuban revolution, few have focused on the tens of thousands of people in prison for "political crimes." Last March the *Journal de Genève* reported some 50,000 "political" prisoners. Estimates of the number of prisoners are difficult to obtain and the Cuban government is reticent to release such figures or allow international organizations to visit its prisons.

In mid-1965 Premier Castro acknowledged that there were close to 20,000 political prisoners in Cuba. Lee Lockwood, not unsympathetic to the Cuban Revolution and author of *Castro's Cuba, Cuba's Fidel*, indicated that the number "was still

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growing...in spite of the fact that counterrevolutionary activity has been slackening gradually since the Missile Crisis."

Other estimates fluctuate around the 50,000 figure. The *New York Times* estimated 40,000 back in 1967; that same year Marino de Medici, an Italian journalist who visited the island, wrote that there were 50,000 in the regular political prisons, and an additional 80,000 in "work camps." Professor Edward Gonzalez, an American scholar at UCLA who also has visited Cuba, reported in 1974 that there were between 25,000 and 80,000; and the *Washington Post* published a 25,000 to 50,000 estimate on June 1, 1975.

Relatively few figures of the old Batista regime are still in jail. Most of them either were dealt with by firing squads or fled the island immediately after the collapse of the old regime. Although not a homogeneous group, the political prisoners are a different sort than the grizzled old reactionaries often stereotyped in pro-Castro literature—prisoners range from Fidel's former comrades in the 26th of July Movement to young peasants who were infants when Castro took over.

Enough information has filtered out from the island, so that the International Rescue Committee, the International League for the Rights of Man, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and Amnesty International have been able to assess the situation.

In a statement this past summer, the respected International Rescue Committee pointed out that "Conditions in the prisons have been described as dismal and worse. Lack of food, lack of water, lack of medical attention, lack of space, and brutal treatment have frequently been reported." The IRC also explained that "what is most appalling in the case of Cuba's political prisoners is the unconscionable length of incarceration."

The *Washington Post* reported last June that letters from prisoners received in this country charged that "some Cuban political prisoners who have completed their terms have been 'resentenced' without ever leaving custody." The *Post* cited the case of Oracio Giordano Orta Gómez, who managed to send to his brother a handwritten copy of his sentence extension, which, the document explains, is a result of his "postcriminal dangerousness" and a type of preventive detention. According to the new sentence, passed by an administrative court, Gómez "had been in punishment cells at various times" for refusing to wear the blue uniform of the rehabilitation plan (a program that sometimes entails attending political indoctrination classes) and for participating in hunger strikes. In answer to this last charge, Gómez wrote in a letter smuggled out of prison:

> ...Only on one occasion did I participate for two days in a hunger strike. I was one of 11 prisoners who were held naked in a locked cell with no lights and in a space of 8 hand-breaths by 12 hand-breaths, for a week before we took this decision....And of course we had to defecate squatting over a hole with only the privacy that the darkness of the cell provided....

The *Washington Post* also mentioned the case of former student leader Pedro Luis Boitel, a leader in the underground against the Batista dictatorship and an opponent of Castro's takeover of the University of Havana.

Boitel's case became a cause *célèbre* for the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, a group attached to the OAS, which had made appeals to the Cuban government since 1965 to save his life:

> ...In May 1972, the Commission was informed that Pedro Luis Boitel, still a prisoner in the El Principe Castle in Havana, was seriously ill as a result of maltreatment and torture to which he continued to be subjected....On May 28, the Commission received a communication informing it that he had died in prison....

About this same case, the National Catholic News Service reported that

> ...He was beaten, tortured with bayonets and denied food and medical attention....He weighed 70 pounds at death. Last April prison officials damaged his spine during beatings, besides inflicting bayonet wounds. When he went on a hunger strike to protest, he was transferred to a security cell and told "this time we will let you die, no doctors."

In calls to the United States, his mother, Mrs. Clara Abrahantes viuda de Boitel, who had also wired Pope Paul begging him to intercede, sought help from the International Red Cross and other world organizations. Boitel died in prison, without receiving medical attention, while his fellow prisoners rioted, burning their mattresses in a futile attempt to save his life. None of his friends or fellow prisoners was permitted to attend Boitel's funeral; he was buried in secret.

REPORTS on widespread use of torture in Cuban prisons have appeared ever since the consolidation of the Castro regime. In the May–June 1970 *Dissent* appeared an appeal to the United Nations by 47 prisoners at La Cabaña Fortress, in which they wrote of murders, beatings, mental torture, and human experiments. In June 1971 *Paris Match* reported that the Cuban government was using "gavetas" or lockers, cells two feet wide, six feet long,

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and seven feet high, in each of which are held three prisoners.

In 1973 Amnesty International reported that Cuba was engaging in systematic torture in a pamphlet on the worldwide "torture epidemic." And in March of 1975 this London-based organization began a campaign, calling on its members to write to Fidel Castro in support of Huber Matos, a former leader of the 26th of July Movement and provincial commander in Castro's rebel army. Matos had been sentenced to 20 years in 1959 for resigning his commission and writing to Castro, warning of a Communist takeover of the Revolution.

According to a document presented by Mrs. Maria Luisa Matos to the Commission on Human Rights of the United Nations in Geneva last March, her husband

> ...was condemned to 20 years in prison because he disagreed ideologically with the leader of the ruling government in Cuba....He has been kept incommunicado for periods of more than one year. He has been the victim of countless abuses and humiliations. Because he refused to accept a program of indoctrination he was forced to live completely nude for two years. In February of 1970 he was isolated in a dark cell with a small window covered with a heavy cloth, sewn to the bars. I do not know if that situation persists since for the past five years he has not been allowed to receive visitors.

One surprising fact is the high percentage of young men and men of rural backgrounds among the prisoners. René Dumont in *Is Cuba Socialist?* mentioned one such case:

> A young sentinel guarding some new rice plantings had one night let cows graze amidst them, and Castro wanted to have him shot. He was restrained with difficulty by being reminded that the grazing would in fact encourage the plant growth. Once over his rage, he agreed to have the sentence changed to 15 years on a prison farm.

Although initially the revolution had the support of the rural population, in the early '60s, when the government reneged on its word "to give land to the toilers," the regime began to have difficulty in enforcing its collectivization policies. In 1967 Lee Lockwood, in his very favorable account of the Revolution, pointed out that "...the majority of the internees are not, as one might assume, men of urban backgrounds, but 'campesinos,' peasants from the mountains and the outlying rural areas. Most are serving terms ranging from two to twenty years...." Since then, the revolutionary leadership has tightened its controls, prohibiting the peasants from slaughtering their animals and requiring that their crops be sold to the government.

Regimentation of the union movement caused resistance among workers and produced a spate of political prisoners over the last 15 years. David Salvador, one-time leader of the Camaguey sugar workers and secretary-general of the CTC (Confederation of Cuban Workers) for the first year of the revolution, has not been heard of since his arrest on November 5, 1960.

The application of government labor decrees has also contributed to the number of politically oriented "crimes" in Cuba. Since 1970 the regime has enacted a series of decrees punishing "absenteeism" and "loafing." The government also has introduced the "worker's biography," a type of labor passport that records a worker's behavior, attitudes, and production quotas. This document is to be kept for every worker at his work place and required for any job transfer.

The Cuban prison system is a source of forced labor along the Stalinist model. Besides the "maximum security prisons" there are dozens of other establishments, including prison farms and work camps.

In every province there are also the "open fronts," composed of traveling brigades. In Havana alone there are eight "fronts." Prisoners are used for many construction projects, doing many hours of "voluntary work" in the hope of an early release. These brigades are composed for the most part of young people who for one reason or another have fallen into disgrace. Ironically, these very units have built many of the revolutionary "showcases" displayed on guided tours of the island.

A particularly painful issue is the plight of women in prison. In 1967 the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights reported that

> the treatment they receive, in addition to being inhuman, violates all pertinent treaties...over 350 of these, suffering from serious ailments, particularly tuberculosis, are deprived of medical care...some have given birth in their prison cells, and several have died of hemorrhages and infections.

A letter from a former Cuban political prisoner, printed by the *Washington Post* on July 8, 1975, stated that there was a group of women political prisoners on a hunger strike at the America Libre (Free Americas) Prison Farm, Wajay, Havana. They had been transferred from La Cabaña Prison, and "at least two of them, Doris Delgado and Ana Lazara Rodriguez, need medical attention."

The International Rescue Committee in a statement presented at a congressional hearing last summer pointed out that

> women prisoners who have refused to submit to reeducation were being held at Farm "El Nuevo Amane-

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cer'' (New Dawn) at Punta Brava in Havana....Many women who have refused to be reeducated are victims of the Cuban version of Gulag Archipelago, among them as of January of 1975 were Clara Alonso, Maria M. Alvarez, Zoila Aguila, Albertina O'Farril at El Nuevo Amanecer; Miriam Ortega, Bertha Aleman and Esther Campos at Havana; and Doris Delgado and Mercedes Pena at the Boniato Prison in Oriente....

Groups who in another context might not be considered ''political prisoners,'' but who have been singled out by official policy as threats to the Revolution, are members of Jehovah's Witnesses and other minor religious sects, and homosexuals. The Witnesses were denounced at the First National Congress on Education and Culture (1971), and the year before last they were finally declared illegal and their churches closed. They are kept in separate camps in order to prevent them from proselytizing among other prisoners.

Homosexuals received early attention during the mid-1960s with the creation of special units, at one time called UMAP (Military Units for Aid to Production) that, according to Jose Yglesias in the *New York Review of Books* (June 3, 1971), were created

> ...to include only young men of draft age whose moral outlook did not in the eye of the authorities make them fit for regular military duty. The units became a catch-all for homosexuals and other undesirables and in fact functioned as prison camps.

Since then the UMAP camps have been abolished, perhaps because of their exposure in the foreign press, but the official policy remains as enunciated in *Granma*, the official organ of the Cuban Communist party on May 9, 1971: ''...the pathological character of homosexual deviations was recognized..all such manifestations are to be firmly rejected....''

The continuing imprisonment of homosexuals—now in regular camps—cannot be excused, as some have attempted to do in the U.S., by blaming the ''machismo mentality.'' The fact is that in spite of social pressures, before the Revolution there was never a systematic massive repression of homosexuals in Cuba.

One final aspect of the prison problem is a result of the intellectual policy of the regime. Cuban intellectuals are free to write as long as they remain subservient to the Revolution. The situation, however, was somewhat fluid until 1971, when a more strict cultural policy began to be enforced with the arrest and recantation of the poet Heberto Padilla (see *Dissent*, Spring 73). Padilla's imprisonment for writing ''counterrevolutionary poetry'' and his confession prompted a group of intellectuals including, Susan Sontag, Jean-Paul Sartre, Octavio Paz, Alberto Moravia, and Simone de Beauvoir, to write to Fidel Castro expressing their ''shame and anger'' and begging Castro ''to spare Cuba...the repressive system that Stalinism imposed in the socialist countries....''

The Cuban cultural scene can be divided into a pre-Padilla and a post-Padilla period. The post-Padilla period has been marked by the imprisonment of a growing number of younger intellectuals and the subsequent clandestine publication of a Cuban version of *samizdat*. In La Cabaña Fortress, Miguel Sales, a 24-year-old poet, has written about the creation of ''a new socialist man.'' According to Sales: ''through the streets of my old Havana, has never walked this new man.''

Other underground poems have been written by men and women too young to have participated in the revolutionary movement of the late 1950s:

> Beware of those who grow in obscurity
> and carry worlds underneath their eyelids....
> Beware of those who did not see you make the earth,
> nor distribute worlds, or punish angels.
> Those unaware of your beards' mythology
> who have not seen the death rays
> flowing from your rifles....

Whether it be poets or peasants, idealistic revolutionaries or iconoclastic youths, the prisons and work camps of Cuba will probably continue to add to their number as long as the wishes of large sections of the population are ignored. Each new government program, decreed from above and without an opportunity for free discussion among the people, has brought in its wake a new influx into Cuba's political prisons. □

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Michael Harrington

"Post-Industrial Society" and the Welfare State

In the *Communist Manifesto,* Marx and Engels described "conservative, or bourgeois, socialism."

> A part of the bourgeoisie [they wrote] wants to remedy *social grievances* in order to ensure the stability of bourgeois society. . . . They want to have the existing society, but without the revolutionary, transforming elements.

The function of this "socialism," they went on to say, was not

> the abolition of bourgeois relations of production, which is possible only in a revolutionary way, but administrative improvements, which can go forward on the basis of this mode of production, which thus alter nothing in the relationship of capital and labor, but in the best case lessen the cost of bourgeois domination and reduce its public budget.

It would be nonsense to suggest that this passing *aperçu* of Marx and Engels (which appears in a rich, but often unread, section of the *Manifesto*) anticipated all the developments of the welfare state. It would be equally silly to ignore the fact that it provides a remarkable organizing insight for the analysis of some of the events of the past century. Indeed, there is a contemporary example of the theory of "bourgeois socialism," which is one of the most influential sociological and political ideas of the times. It is the notion of industrial (or postindustrial) society associated with thinkers like Raymond Aron and Daniel Bell.

For Bell, three events led to the emergence of the postindustrial society. First, there was the Great Depression, which forced the recognition that the direction of the economy is "a central governmental task." Second, there was state subsidy of the new science-based technology, which became a decisive factor in the 1950s. And third, there was the response to the social demands of the '60s which, though "pell-mell and piecemeal," led the government to make a commitment "not only to the creation of a substantial welfare state *but to redress the impact of all economic and social inequalities as well.*" This thesis, it will be noted, is essentially a generalization of the Keynesian experience. The other antecedents of planned capitalism are either briefly mentioned or ignored.

Bell introduced his analysis of this evolution in *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society* with a modest disclaimer. He wrote that he had resisted the impulse to make too large a generalization.

> Instead [he went on], I am dealing here with *tendencies,* and have sought to explore the meaning and consequences of those tendencies if the changes in social structure that I describe were to work themselves to their logical limits. But there is no guarantee that they will. . . . Thus I am writing what Hans Vahinger called an "as if," a fiction, a logical construction of what *could* be, against which the future social reality

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> can be compared in order to see what intervened to change society in the direction it did take.

The only problem with this humble agnosticism is that Bell does not act upon it. He continually makes assertions about facts, not tendencies, i.e., that the welfare state seeks *"to redress the impact of all economic and social inequalities."* That claim, as will be seen, is simply not true; but important at this moment is that the very fact that it is made indicates that Bell's "as if" image of his thesis is an escape clause, not a description of his work.

There are, Bell says, five "dimensions, or components" of the term, postindustrial society. In the economic sector there is a shift from goods-producing to a service economy; occupationally, there is the "pre-eminence" of the professional and technical class; the axial principle of the society is "the centrality of theoretical knowledge as the source of innovation and of policy formulation for the society"; there is technological forecasting; and decison-making takes place by means of a new "'intellectual technology.'" All of this is clearly related to the growth of the welfare state, particularly in its role as manager of the economy. Bell writes, "A post-industrial society . . . is increasingly a communal society wherein public mechanisms rather than the market become the allocators of goods, and public choice, rather than individual demand, becomes the arbiter of services." So, ". . . if the major historic turn in the last quarter of a century has been the subordination of economic function to societal goals, the political order necessarily becomes the control system of society." Therefore, "what the traditional classes fought out in the economic realm . . . is now transferred to the political realm."

Although Bell does not make the point explicitly (he waffles on this count), these assertions add up to the theory that the postindustrial society is also postcapitalist. Indeed, if economic function has been subordinated to "societal" goals, that might even imply that it is socialist. But then, Bell would argue that the very terms "capitalist" and "socialist" have become, if not meaningless, not very useful and that he, and his colleagues, are inventing a new vocabulary to deal with a new reality. That is his and their right. If, however, the factual assertions that underpin the new definition—say, that economic function has been subordinated to "societal goals"—are inaccurate, then Bell's linguistic innovation is invalid too.

A critical point that allows one to check the worth of the postindustrial categories of analysis concerns the ruling class in contemporary society. "If the dominant figures of the past 100 years have been the entrepreneur, the businessman and the industrial executive," Bell argues,

> the "new men" are the scientists, the mathematicians, the economists and the engineers of the new intellectual technology. . . . The basic values of society [prior to the postindustrial shift] have been focused on business institutions, the largest rewards have been found in business, and the strongest power has been held by the business community, although today that power is to some extent shared within the factory by the trade-union, and regulated within the society by the political order. . . . In the post-industrial society, production and business decisions will be subordinated to, or will derive from, other forces in society; the crucial decisions regarding the growth of the economy and its balance will come from government, but they will be based on the government's sponsorship of research and development.

This means, Bell holds, that "the long-run historical trend in Western society" is "the move away from governance by political economy to governance by political philosophy . . . a turn to non-capitalist modes of thought." But, if the experts are thus in the process of replacing the capitalists as decision-makers, surely the outcome of those decisions, made by new men on a new calculus, must be observably different from

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those of the old order. In fact, this is not the case. There are indeed changed structures; only they have an old, and quite capitalist, content.

In the course of empirically challenging Bell's theory by showing that the results it predicts do not take place, not even incipiently, a basic proposition will begin to emerge. When the government intervenes into an economy dominated by private corporations to promote the common good, those corporations will normally be the prime beneficiaries of that intervention. The planners may be liberals, or even socialists, but they will not be able to carry out policies that run counter to the crucial institutions of the society unless they have the support of a determined mass movement willing to fight for structural change. Since this condition usually is fulfilled only in exceptional crisis circumstances, the normal tendency of the welfare state—even with the "new men" admittedly much more in evidence and conscious planning taking on a greater importance—is to follow the old capitalist priorities in a new, sophisticated way.

Marx and Engels glimpsed the essential mechanism of this phenomenon long ago (which is hardly to argue that they said the last word on it). Proudhon had proposed that the government provide cheap credit for cooperatives and small business. If that were done, Engels wrote to Marx, the workers' societies and small producers would not be able to qualify for credit at the state bank, but big business would. It would have the collateral to prove that it was a good risk and the expertise to take advantage of the cheap money. John Maynard Keynes understood this point in his own way. Businessmen, he said, must be treated more gently than politicians. "If you work them into the surly, obstinate, terrified mood, of which domestic animals, wrongly handled, are so capable, the nation's burden will not get carried to market; and in the end public opinion will veer their way."

John Kennedy was forced to learn this depressing fact during his brief presidency. He confronted this reality when he tried to deal with the balance-of-payments issue. "It's a ridiculous situation," he said, "for us to be squeezing down essential public activities in order not to touch private investment and tourist spending—but apparently that's life." That was not "life," but *life under capitalist conditions,* and the argument Kennedy faced—that government must sacrifice its priorities to profit in order to provide for investment—is still very much with us in the '70s.

The macroeconomic planning of the welfare state, then, follows, and must follow, capitalist priorities. The government and the "societal goals" that it articulates are subordinated to private purpose—not the other way around, as Bell thinks. This was, and is, clearly the case in energy policy. Here one sees vividly how the capitalist structure of the welfare state was the decisive reason for the great Inflation-Recession of the '70s.

It might be argued that oil is an exceptional case. Its giant American enterprises are vertically integrated and part of an international corporate conspiracy that has existed since the 1920s. Moreover, oil is the only instance in which there has been a dramatic increase in American overseas investment in the Third World; the more typical multinationals are involved in Europe and Canada. So, it would be well to outline how the patterns that are writ so large in energy policy apply to all of big business in the United States.

First of all, there is the case of federal housing policy during the past 40 years. It too has followed corporate priorities. The migration of the middle class and the rich to the suburbs, as I documented in *Socialism,* has been subsidized by Washington. Over a period of three decades, the government helped build 10 million units for the better-off and 650,000 units of low-cost housing for the poor. In 1969, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that there were $2.5 billion in subsidies for the urban freeways, which facilitated the commuting of the privileged,

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and only $175 million for mass transit. All of this made good commercial sense even though it helped perpetrate the social disaster of the disintegration of the central cities, the consequent isolation of the racial and ethnic minorities, the subversion of the passenger rail system, and so forth.

As the Council of Economic Advisers put it in its 1969 report, "Investing in new housing for low-income families—particularly in big cities—is usually a losing proposition. Indeed the *most profitable investment* is often one that demolishes homes of low-income families to make room for business and high-income families." What did this government agency mean by "profitable" in this statement? It could not possibly have been referring to a social conception of increased benefits, since the process it was describing had exacted a high public cost in crime, welfare expenses and, above all, wrecked human lives.

The Council was, of course, talking about the private-profit criterion. And that was, not simply in theory but in fact, the one that the government had followed. Those billions of dollars had been assigned to the housing of the affluent on the grounds that their discarded dwellings would eventually "trickle down" to the poor. That did not happen; the central cities were turned into devastated regions instead.

A second case in point is food.

When one thinks of American agriculture, one usually envisions a mythic image of the yeoman farmer. In reality, it is a sector dominated by gigantic agribusinesses. Between 1960 and 1974, the number of farms in America decreased by 25 percent, but the larger units (with more than $20,000 a year in sales) went up by 80 percent. In 1971, the 21 percent of the largest farms received approximately 80 percent of the cash receipts from farming. Among the "farmers" in America, one finds I.T.T., the John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Co., Tenneco (which used to be the Tennessee Gas and Transmission Co.), Gulf and Western, Boeing Aircraft, and other giant corporations. And the average investment in reproducible farm capital (machinery, livestock, etc.) in the United States was $18,000 in 1964. (In Latin America it is less than $500.)

These big businesses on the land have been the prime recipients of tens of billions of dollars in federal subsidy. In the '30s, when the Depression wreaked havoc on the farm, Washington embarked upon a program of planned, socialized scarcity, even though people were (and still are) hungry. It was an almost classic acting-out of the scenario described by Marx in Volume I of *Das Kapital.* Agricultural productivity had grown enormously and was "overproductive" for a society of restricted, maldistributed income. Therefore, the accomplishments of agricultural technology became, quite literally, a fetter upon the system. Farm animals were killed, farmers were paid for not growing crops. This latter policy benefited mainly the largest landowners and producers; it provided nothing for subsistence farmers and a pittance for small units. Thus, the trend toward agricultural concentration—the destruction of that sturdy, independent yeoman of the Jeffersonian myth and his replacement by a corporation—was expedited at enormous federal expense. It was, after all, "sensible"—without a capitalist definition of the term—to orient policy toward the most successful, and politically powerful, producers.

In 1974, a study carried out by the National Farmers Union documented the consequence of the government's pursuit of corporate priorities in the fields of America. Between 1968 and 1973—that is, in the five years immediately prior to an incredible inflation of food costs in America and the emergence of starvation as a reality in the poor countries—Washington paid $15.5 billion to farmers in return for their idling 233 million acres of land that would have produced an estimated grain crop of 23 million metric tons. "Assuming yields of only two thirds of the national average for the grain best suited to the various lands held out of production," the study said, "the five-year total would have reached the equivalent of 8,609 million bushels of wheat.

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This is nearly a billion bushels more than the actual total harvest of 7,669 million bushels of wheat in the U.S. during those five years."

It cost billions of dollars not to produce those bushels of wheat in a hungry, partly starving, world. As the Joint Congressional Committee staff computed the price for nonproduction in 1970, there were $5.2 billion in direct federal outlays to the farmers, and food cost the consumer an extra $4.5 billion in higher prices due to the scarcity he had already subsidized in his role as a taxpayer. So, the total cost in 1970 to the people of the United States was $10 billion to keep crops from being planted. This is perhaps the most obvious single case of how the business pursuit of profit is institutionalized in welfare-state policy and takes precedence over the most basic of all economic processes, the production of food. Moreover, as will be seen, these tens of billions of taxpayers' dollars made an important contribution to the inflation of the 1970s and helped limit America's ability to respond to the crime of global malnutrition.

The tax system in the United States is one of the most important instrumentalities of corporate values. It is utterly dominated by "political economy" (corporations) and not by "political philosophy" (liberal technocrats).

First of all, there has been no trend toward equality in the United States during the past generation (i.e., since 1945) and it is questionable whether there was any equality trend at all during the twentieth century. The relative shares of wealth are at least as maldistributed today as they were at the end of the Great Depression. The figures are difficult to pin down—this is after all the "dirty little secret" of American democracy—and some of the most reliable are more than ten years old. However, the basic and intolerable fact is not really in dispute; it was, for instance, admitted by Richard Nixon's Council of Economic Advisers in 1974. As the economist Lester Thurow assembled the data:

U.S. Distribution of Family Wealth 1962

% of Total Families by Wealth	*% of Total Family Wealth*
Lowest 25.4	0.0
Next 31.5	6.6
Next 24.4	17.2
Top 18.7	76.2
(Top 7.5)	(59.1)
(Top 2.4)	(44.4)
(Top .5)	(25.8)

So, the wealthiest Americans—0.5 percent of the families—own more (25.8 percent of the total) than the bottom 81.3 percent (who own 23.8 percent of the country).

In theory—and in the imagination of most Americans as well as in the propaganda of big business—the tax system is progressive. If this were indeed the case, one would expect that the trend toward the concentration of wealth would be offset by the various federal, state and local levies. In fact, the way in which taxes are collected is only most mildly progressive (if it is progressive at all); and the way in which tax expenditures are allocated favors the rich with billions and even tens of billions in subsidies a year. More to the point, the rationale whereby the government redistributes burdens from the wealthy to the working people is that it is necessary to make the capitalist system work.

Joseph Pechman and Benjamin Okner did a careful study of the tax burden in the United States. Before noting their conclusion, an important, but unfortunately abstruse, methodological point has to be made. Most government statistics omit capital gains as an element in family income; thus, the growth in the value of the equity held by the rich in boom years is not counted. (This is the *only* form of income that is not taxed when it is made, and this fact, along with the weakness of the inheritance laws, allows the rich to evade billions in taxes.) However, if capital gains are included, then the income inequality in the United States increases dramatically.

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Using the government's figures, the top 1 percent of the people get "only" 4.8 percent of the annual income; using the adjusted figures, their take goes up to 10.5 percent.[1]

Pechman's and Okner's point is recognized even by the conservatives in government, although they prefer, for obviously political reasons, to publish statistics that play down the maldistribution of income. If the adjusted figures are used, and if the reasonable assumption is made that corporation taxes are shifted, in whole or in part, to consumers, then the effective rate of taxation on the very rich is only 5 percent more than that paid by most families. The federal tax system is thus not progressive, but proportional "and therefore has little effect on the distribution of income."

It is a scandal that the tax system is not, as is so often claimed, progressive. One might infer that this is the case because of the political power of wealth in America. However, when one turns from the way in which taxes are collected to the manner in which tax expenditures are made, there is no need for inference. The government proudly and openly states that these are motivated by capitalist considerations.

A tax expenditure occurs when Washington decides that some particular class of taxpayers need pay no tax, or will be forgiven a portion of their tax. It has the same effect as a direct expenditure of government money, since lowering one group's rate effectively increases the rates of everyone else. For instance, realized capital gains are taxed at lower rates than any other form of income.[2] People with incomes of $20,000 to $25,000 a year, a Congressional Committee reported in 1972, receive $100 in benefits from this provision; while those with incomes of $1 million get $640,000 a year from it. More generally, the deductions—or tax expenditures—in the Internal Revenue Code provide 10 percent of the benefits for the 50 percent of the people at the bottom of the society and 15 percent of them for the 3 percent at the top.

In 1975, the projected federal budget for 1976 contained no less than $91.8 billion in tax expenditures. These figures, it should be noted, were computed on the basis of very conservative assumptions—the fact that imputed rental value of an owner-occupied house was not considered to be a tax expenditure and neither was the failure to count in the accrued value of capital gains during a tax year. But even with these definitions, which made the Internal Revenue code look fairer than it is, there were shocking notations. For instance, the deductibility of mortgage interest and property taxes yielded homeowners a tax subsidy of almost $13 billion—almost ten times as much as was spent on public housing assistance in 1975!

In 1975, the Treasury prepared, at the request of Senator Walter Mondale, an analysis of tax expenditures as they showed up in 1974 spending. In that year, the two-tenths of 1 percent of the taxpayers who had incomes of more than $100,000 a year received 12.6 percent of the subsidies in a number of major categories; the 46.9 percent of the taxpayers whose incomes ranged up to $10,000 that year, got a mere 16.6 percent. And the top 1.2 per cent got a third more than the bottom 46.9 percent. In theory, such policies are supposed to stimulate business and individuals to act in a way that will promote the common good. In fact, as Senator William Proxmire pointed out when releasing a Joint Economic Committee analysis, "our studies have shown that many subsidy programs do not work well economically, they are often directed at outmoded or nonexistent objectives, they

[1]Income, it will be noted, is less maldistributed than wealth; the top 1 percent have 10.5 percent of the income, but the top 0.5 percent have 25.8 percent of the wealth. This simply shows that the rich have most of their holdings in long-term assets, which are not subject to income tax, and that they have a positive incentive to minimize their income. Either figure is outrageous; both are only the different sides of the same golden coin.

[2]When capital gains are realized when stock is sold and a profit is taken—they are income. The capital gains that Pechman and Okner computed are "accrued"—that is, they include both gains that were turned into cash and those that were held as part of a continuing investment.

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redistribute income to the affluent, and in many cases their costs far exceeded their benefits to the society as a whole."

So, in many cases the argument for a given deduction was clearly fallacious. The privileged treatment of the capital gains of the rich was worth $14 billion in 1971. The theory was that the government thereby encouraged people to save, which in turn provided investment funds for new jobs, and so on. In fact, as Benjamin Okner pointed out to the Joint Economic Committee, only a small and declining portion of corporate investment in 1971 came from external financing. So, most of the $14 billion was a handsome, if unconscious, gift to the wealthy from the less-well-off. But this systematic bias does not operate simply in this or that case. It informs all of macroeconomic governmental policy in the United States.

In this post-Keynesian era, the tax system is not conceived of as a mechanism for collecting and disbursing public revenues. Its prime function is to facilitate countercyclical policy, to expand demand when there is excess capacity and unemployment, to restrain it when the opposite is the case. Since corporations are the primary economic units in the society, such countercyclical tax policy must, as Keynes so well understood, be kind to executives. Over 30 years ago, Michael Kalecki shrewdly anticipated the problems that would arise in such an undertaking. Business, he said, is opposed to government spending for three reasons: a dislike of government intervention in the economy, as such; opposition to the direction of government spending (public investment and subsidizing competition); and fear of the undisciplined work force that would result from a full-employment economy.

One of the ways to deal with this corporate hostility to government intervention, Kalecki argued, was to have the state stimulate and subsidize *private* investment. That would make businessmen less grumpy about bureaucratic interference, since they would make money from it; and it would not put public money into public investments, nor would it underwrite the consumption of the masses. Kalecki's reading of the political dimensions of Keynesian policy in a capitalist economy proved prophetic, above all, in the United States.

Indeed, this point helps to explain the function of the warfare state within the welfare state. Military spending has the marvelous quality of conferring subsidized profits on inefficient corporations producing goods that do not, like the power generated by the Tennessee Valley Authority, compete with the output of other firms in the consumer market. It thus neatly synthesizes the worst potential of both capitalism and socialism. This does not, however, mean that a massive arms sector is a necessity for capitalism, a precondition for its continuing existence. As Seymour Melman has pointed out, Germany and Japan did quite well after World War II, even though defeat deprived them of the right and duty of wasting a good portion of their substance on the means of destruction. For that matter, the Pentagon's share of the Gross National Product has declined somewhat in recent years. Moreover, it is a mechanistic and silly economic determinism to try to reduce all of the complicated international politics of the postwar decades to a reflex of a militaristic economy. The tragic, unconscionable American intervention in Vietnam, to take but one case in point, was also senseless from a rationally calculated capitalist (or imperialist) point of view. The financiers and Wall Streeters who participated in considerable numbers in the antiwar campaigns of 1968 understood this even if some self-proclaimed Marxists did not.

And yet, if capitalism is not inevitably and intrinsically militarist, the great fact remains that arms spending is peculiarly congenial to it. The businessmen who refused to let Roosevelt engage in social spending at a rate that would have ended the Great Depression became patriotic "dollar a year" men as soon as war broke out. In part their reaction was sincere; in part, it expressed the knowledge (or, at the time, the *intuition*) that military "socialism" is profoundly antisocialist. But,

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then, even when the system adopts pacific measures of government intervention—and does so under liberal auspices—it has the same point of maintaining, and extending, the status quo. Military spending is only one instrument of capitalist survival, albeit an important and fearful one.

When, for instance, John Kennedy wanted to get the economy moving again in the early '60s, he could have done so, as Kenneth Galbraith and the AFL-CIO urged, by direct outlays for social investments. That, however, would have pitted him against the political power of business (and of reaction in general). So, just as Kalecki predicted, he opted for a tax cut that would benefit the corporations more than anyone else. In a speech defending his policy before the Economic Club of New York, he waxed so conservative that Galbraith said that he had given "the most Republican speech since McKinley," and *Time* Magazine noted that he sounded like the National Association of Manufacturers.

This did not mean, as many on the left would probably assume, that Kennedy had "sold out." It is much more profound than that, and one can concede Kennedy's *bona fides* without harm to the essential point. The President of the United States was bowing to the power relationships of an economy dominated by private corporations. In such a setting, he could—particularly if he had been much more powerful in the Congress than he was at that time—have acted otherwise; but all of the institutional, structural pressures in American society urged him to act as he did.

As a result of this general tendency of the political economy of a capitalist society, all of the tax reductions between 1964 and 1973 favored the rich. Some 16.1 percent of the tax returns in that period came from people with incomes under $3,000; they received 7.9 percent of the tax cuts. They were only 4.7 percent of the returns in the $20,000-to-$50,000 category, but they received 10.3 percent of the benefits; and the 0.6 percent of the people with incomes over $50,000 got 0.9 percent of the cuts. At the same time, the corporations got bonanzas in the form of investment tax credits. The economy of the United States was thus stimulated by pampering the rich and slighting the poor.

So macroeconomic policy is procorporate in two basic ways. First, it stimulates private investment and thereby allows the executives to determine the actual form that the public expenditure will take. Instead of direct outlays for health, mass transportation, education, and the like, there are tax cuts that allow the private sector to build and sell whatever it pleases without any reference to social usefulness. And second, the benefits of the public expenditures are assigned in inverse proportion to need, with the corporations and the rich getting most and the poor least.

A carefully documented and even ingenious study by an academic moderate, Harold Wilensky's *The Welfare State and Equality,* disputes the kind of argument I have made. The welfare state, Wilensky asserts, has an egalitarian effect, because the "pay out is typically more progressive than the financing is regressive." That conclusion is wrong, but Wilensky honestly arrived at it on the basis of a flawed, but revealing, method. In computing the regressivity of the financing, he excludes capital gains and expense accounts. But capital gains, as we have seen, are the most inequitable and massively subsidized source of the privilege of the wealthy. By one stroke of a statistical definition, Wilensky thus biases his cases. Second, he treats the welfare state narrowly, concentrating on social security programs, but ignoring the tens of billions paid out in the dole for the rich in the Internal Revenue Code as well as the gains made by the corporate class as a result of federal economic management. And finally, Wilensky is much too optimistic about the progressiveness of the welfare state "pay out." This is a point that deserves some attention in its own right.

Medicaid is the federal program designed to bring health care to the poor. It is financed by both Washington and by the individual states. Predictably, the richest states—New

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York, California, Massachusetts—take a maximum advantage of this law; the poorest states do the least. There are 46 percent of the poverty-stricken in the South, but only 17 percent of the Medicaid payments are made there, and the three affluent states disburse 50 percent of the funds. And even social security itself refracts the basic unfairness of America's class structure. It may well be that the poor do not get more benefits from it, because they die earlier and work longer than anyone else in the society. Moreover, we do know that whites use Medicaid more than blacks (because of the shortage of doctors in black areas) and that the elderly with a $15,000 income get twice as much from Medicare as those with less than $5,000 a year. Considerations like these led the Brookings Institution, a center of moderate, pragmatic liberalism, to conclude that there is no redistribution of wealth from federal programs for "transferring" income—theoretically, but only theoretically—from the rich to the poor.

All of these facts are at odds with Bell's theory of a postindustrial society. One of the quintessential domains of the "new men" was and is economic policy. This is an example of a new intellectual technology, of the rise of nonmarket forces and so on. And yet it turns out that, even under a liberal Administration like Kennedy's, those new men are forced, willy-nilly, to follow corporate priorities when they elaborate the government's program. And this is so because the macroeconomics of the welfare state, for all the momentous changes that have taken place, are still filled with a capitalist content. That welfare state, then, is not a new form of society, any more than Bismarckian "socialism" was; it is, rather, a new way of protecting the old order.

To be sure, the welfare state also contains contradictory tendencies, the seeds, not of one new order, but of two. As of now, however, it is primarily and fundamentally capitalist, and this is the key to the secret history of the great economic and social crisis of the '70s. □

"An entire herd of sacred cows has hereby been most efficiently slaughtered, quartered and hung out in public view."*

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Lester Thurow

The Pursuit of Equity

The Target

Probably all the people in the United States—left, right, and center—would say they are in favor of an equitable society. The differences arise with regard to what exactly is meant by equity, and the divergent evaluations of the costs and benefits in conflicting ways of achieving equity. Since, in our democratic country, the society's idea of a fair distribution of economic resources depends upon some bringing together of our various individual ideas of equity, the first problem is to determine how each of us would specify an equitable society. Only then can we move on to the problem of determining and implementing our collective wisdom.

To aid in this process, perform the following "*Gedanken* experiment": Imagine that all economic resources were to be awarded in a random lottery where none of us would know whether we were to gain the largest or smallest prize. If this were the case, what distribution of prizes would we like our lottery to distribute? While we might disagree on the amount of inequality we would be willing to generate, most of us would not advocate great inequalities, and all of us would be for some minimum prize (our survival could depend on it).

But most of us would also probably be quick to respond that the previous *Gedanken* experiment was unfair or incomplete, since it did not take into account the problem of generating economic prizes. It focused solely on the problem of distributing economic prizes, while the real problem is to both generate and distribute economic prizes. Therefore we would want to know what incentives (potential economic inequalities) were necessary to produce the current quantum of economic goods and services, and whether there was a fair set of relationships between individual inputs into the economy and individual receipts from it.

If you believe in the norm of equality, but with the reservation that violations of equality may be functionally necessary to operate our real-world economy, I would put you in the mainstream of modern Rousseauian thinking. "All men are by nature equal." "But differences may be necessary." Given these beliefs, all differences in economic rewards must be based on evidence of their necessity for keeping the economy operating. The burden of proof is on those who advocate inequality, not on the advocates of equality. The norm is equality, and inequalities must be shown to be beneficial. Those advocating inequality must prove that any diminution in inequality would reduce the size or rate of growth of the economic pie that is available for distribution.

Given this burden of proof, what does the evidence show? Fortunately, this is one of the few cases where all the empirical evidence points in the same direction. Surveys of work behavior,[1] econometric studies of work deci-

[1]See, e.g., George Break, "Income Taxes and Incentive to Work," *American Economic Review*, September 1957.

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sions,[2] and the negative income tax experiments,[3] all indicate that current inequalities are much larger than those necessary to produce and expand the current Gross National Product. The tax system (positive and negative) could be made more progressive and, if anything, work efforts would increase rather than diminish.

But there is an easier and faster way to demonstrate this point without going into the subtleties of a voluminous economic literature. Observe the actual earnings of year-round full-time white male workers (see the table below). Based on hours of work, this group still provides most of the labor used in the U.S. economy. Now compare this distribution of earnings prizes for fully employed white males with the distribution of income prizes for the entire population. The distribution of economic prizes for fully employed white males is much more equal than that for the population as a whole, although it is a long way from complete equality. Instead of a situation where the share of the top quintile is 28 times as large as the share of the bottom quintile, we have a situation where the share of the top quintile is only 4.5 times as large. Yet this gap clearly serves as an adequate incentive to keep most of the workforce working.

Unless you think that the culture of women, minorities, and underemployed white males is different from the culture of employed white males, there is every reason to believe that a reward structure that is capable of keeping white males economically on their toes is also capable of doing the same for other Americans. Inequalities greater than those that now occur in the earnings of fully employed white males are not functional. They exist; but they are not necessary to keeping the economy functioning at its current level. The earnings of fully employed white males may also be more unequal than is necessary to keep the economy functioning, but this is a problem we can postpone worrying about until the whole economy reaches the relatively low degree of earnings inequality that currently exists among fully employed white males. Similarly, a structure of input and output relationships that is fair for fully employed white males is presumably fair for the rest of the economy.

While the distribution of economic rewards offered to fully employed white males is clearly adequate to encourage individual work effort, it does not speak directly to the problem of individual incentives for savings and the accumulation of capital. Given current discussion of the possible existence of future capital shortages, it is necessary to think about savings incentives as well as work incentives. There are economic studies of saving behavior equivalent to those of work,

Distributions of Economic Resources* (1973)

	Earnings of Fully Employed White Males	Income of all Persons with Income
$ 0- 2,999	3.8%	35.3%
$ 3,000- 5,999	8.9	20.9
$ 6,000- 9,999	26.9	19.6
$10,000-14,999	34.2	14.4
$15,000-24,999	20.2	7.6
$25,000 & up	6.0	2.3
	Share of Total Earnings	**Share of Total Income**
Bottom Quintile	7.7 percent	1.9 percent
2nd "	14.0	6.8
3rd "	18.6	14.0
4th "	23.7	24.3
Top "	36.0	53.0

*U.S. Department of Commerce, *Consumer Income, Series P 60 & 97* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office), pp. 116 and 146.

[2]See, g.e., Marvin Kosters, "Effects of Income Tax on Labor Supply," in *The Taxation of Income from Capital,* Harberger and Bailey, eds. (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1969).

[3]See, e.g., "Symposium—The Graduate Work Incentive Program," *Journal of Human Resources,* Spring 1974.

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but it is important to understand that there is a fundamental difference between savings incentives and work incentives.[4] There is no substitute for individual work effort. To keep an economy growing, individuals must be willing to work. There are, however, many substitutes for individual savings. Most of our current savings are not, in fact, voluntary individual savings but involuntary institutional savings in the form of pension plans, retained corporate earnings, depreciation allowances, etc. Institutions cannot work, but institutions can save. Societies can and do operate without individual savings.

Governments also can save. They simply collect more tax revenue than they need for current expenditures and then lend to or invest their savings in industrial enterprises. Individual work incentives are necessary to a rapidly growing economy, but individual savings incentives are not. If we shall really have a capital shortage in the future, the equitable way to raise the necessary capital is not to lower the already low tax rates of the rich but to raise whatever savings are necessary by increasing tax revenue in an equitable way.

From the point of view of both work effort and capital accumulation, the current degree of inequality among fully employed white males is adequate to keep the economy growing as rapidly as it has in the past. Inequalities greater than this are clearly unnecessary and therefore constitute inequities. As a result, I would suggest that we consider the current degree of inequality among fully employed white males our "interim equity target." Given the gap between the current degree of inequality in the economy as a whole and that among fully employed white males, there is little point in arguing whether we should or should not proceed beyond this "interim equity target." The solution of that problem can be left to the future.

[4]Savings studies show that higher taxes cause reductions in individual savings depending on the consumption function that is relevant to each income class.

Jobs for Everyone

TO GENERATE EQUITY, a society must offer not only a fair outcome but a fair process. Those who are physically able to contribute to the economy should receive rewards based on their contributions, just as fully employed white males receive rewards based on theirs. It is quite appropriate to point out that fully employed white males must work full-time year-round while many individuals in the economy do not wish to work full-time. As a result the "interim equity target" should be thought of as a standard of potential equity that anyone can achieve if he or she is willing to work full-time year-round. Individuals who wish to work part-time should be able to participate in an economy where the distribution of hourly earnings is no more unequal than that for full-time year-round workers; but their annual earnings clearly should be different. Anyone who wishes to work full-time year-round, however, should be offered that chance. That right to work, as much as it is desired within commonly agreed standards, is a fundamental part of "equal opportunity" in the economic sphere.

To achieve the suggested standard of equity, we must face the fundamental failure of the U.S. economy. The U.S. economy has proven incapable, in periods of peace, of consistently generating jobs for everyone who wants to work. The period since World War II illustrates the point. Recessons occurred in 1949, 1954, 1957-58, 1960-61, 1969-70, and 1974-75. In the periods between these recessions, unemployment was high.

As I was growing up professionally, I was constantly taught the received wisdom that there were no technical reasons why macroeconomic policies could not be used to consistently generate jobs for everyone who really wanted to work. I now believe those teachings to be technically correct but irrelevant. Macroeconomic policies could be used to hold the economy at a point where there were jobs for everyone who wants to work, but they will not in fact be used for that

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purpose. The reasons for this are many: time lags in the decisions process; fears of inflation; incompetence. Whatever the reasons, we need face the fact that our current economy and our current institutions will not consistently generate jobs for everyone who wants work. They never have and they never will.

As a result, the prime requirement for the achievement of equity revolves around a restructuring of the economy, so that it does provide jobs for everyone. Given what we preach about the U.S. as a "work ethic" society, this should be a moral duty as well as economically desirable. We consistently preach that work is the only "ethical" way to receive income, and we cast aspersions on the "welfare" society. But if work is the only ethical way to receive income, we have a moral responsibility to make sure that everyone who really wants to can find work. Not to do so is equivalent to saying that you must go to church to be ethical but then locking the church doors.

If equity requires jobs for everyone who is able and willing to work, we face the need to restructure our economy. Since private enterprise is incapable of guaranteeing jobs for everyone who wants to work, this means that government, and particularly the federal government, must institute programs to guarantee work for everyone who wants it.

No one should deny that a real, open-ended guaranteed job program would constitute a major restructuring of our economy. Patterns of labor-market behavior and the outputs of our economy would be fundamentally altered. There would be a move toward socialism in that government would own the means of production for those who participated in the guaranteed job program and the government would assume a social responsibility of making sure that everyone who wanted to had an opportunity to work.

Real economic competition, however, would almost certainly increase. If the guaranteed jobs are to be real jobs, then any guaranteed job program must produce some economic outputs. These outputs might constitute street cleaning and competition with public sanitation departments, or rebuilding rail roadbeds and competition with private industry. The problem is not finding worthwhile things to do. The President's Automation Commission Report listed millions of potential public service jobs in the mid-1960s, and anyone with even a little imagination can think of many things that could be done to make this a better society. If the option is between idleness and work, the choice is simple. As long as any useful output is produced, a work project is preferable to that project called involuntary unemployment.

If a guaranteed program is to achieve the objectives for which it is intended, it must have several characteristics.

- First, it is not a program of employment at minimum wage rates. The objective is to open a structure of economic work opportunities for everyone that are equivalent to those open to fully employed white males. Thus a guaranteed job program must have a structure of earnings and promotion opportunities equal to that of fully employed white males. It would have some low-wage jobs and some high-wage jobs, but most jobs would be in the middle range, and some or all of its workers might be unionized.
- Second, it must be an open-ended program, providing jobs to everyone who is able and willing to work regardless of age, race, sex, education, etc. Abilities and talents will play a role in that a person gets a job within the distribution of job opportunities, but no one will be denied full- or part-time work who desires it.
- Third, the program should not be viewed as a temporary antirecessionary measure. A lack of employment opportunities is not a temporary short-run aspect of the U.S. economy; it is a permanent, endemic part of the U.S. economy. Even if this were not true, the program would still need to be permanent, since no industry could be expected to go in and out of business over the course of the

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business cycle and still operate efficiently. There is no reason, however, why some of the jobs could not be temporary short-run jobs for people who are temporarily unable to find work in the conventional private or public sectors of the economy.

What would such a program cost? Payments for labor, materials, and capital might be high but, like all economic projects, the costs would depend on the difference between the value of output produced and the payments made to factors of production. Given care in selection, there is no reason why the projects could not generate substantial net benefits. Since the project would be employing idle economic resources (workers without jobs), the real economic costs (opportunity costs) would be substantially less than monetary costs. Whatever monetary costs are necessary, however, should be raised by a system of wealth taxes, designed to bring the distribution of wealth and capital income into conformity with that of earnings.

How many people would need to be employed in a guaranteed job program? At the moment, with 8 million people unemployed, the answer is obviously many millions. If a guaranteed job program were actually to exist, however, the performance of macroeconomic policy-makers would improve. Recent recessions have been caused by Administrations that deliberately set fiscal and monetary policies so as to slow down the economy, create unemployment, and slow the rate of inflation. If these policy-makers had been forced to hire in the public economy those people they deliberately rendered unemployed in the private economy, I suspect there would have been a sudden increase in the desire to maximize private employment opportunities. Thus the number who would need to be employed in public projects would be large, but still, it would be much smaller than the current number of unemployed persons.

A guaranteed job program also would eliminate the endless sterile debates about what fraction of the unemployed are lazy and unwilling to work. But, instead of arguing about this point, let's put it to the test and see how many people really want to work and how many are in fact lazy.

Income Support

IF A REAL guaranteed job program were in place, it would be possible to reduce welfare programs and expenditures while at the same time expanding the benefits for those who legitimately cannot be expected to work because of age and/or physical impairments. For the moment, leave aside the "lazy" or AFDC mothers and think about those individuals who, everyone would agree, could not be expected to work. Most of these individuals are already covered by the Social Security system, and it is simply a matter of deciding upon their appropriate minimum-income support level. In the long run, guaranteed jobs and opportunities for full-time or part-time work after the age of 65 would substantially reduce the need for income support even among the elderly.

Evidence from Gallup polls seems to indicate fairly widespread support for the idea that the minimum acceptable income is approximately half of the actual median family income for the deserving poor.[5] For a family of four this would have meant a minimum-income support level of $6,500 in 1974. Elderly families with one or two individuals would get less than this, based on studies of differences in the cost of living between families of four and families of one or two. Compared to what we are now spending on transfer payments, the costs of doing this would not be great.

Income-support controversies obviously arise when we start thinking about the "undeserving poor"—basically AFDC mothers and the "lazy." We all know that we are

[5] *See Lee Rainwater, "Economic Inequality and the Credit Income Tax," Working Papers for a New Society,* Vol. 1, #1, p. 50.

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going to be elderly and that we may have our personal resources depleted by illness—but we all know that we are not lazy and most of us either think or know that we will not end up AFDC mothers.

With a guaranteed job program I suspect that there would be fewer AFDC mothers (some would voluntarily choose work and others would then be able to find men who could provide economic support), but there certainly would still be female-headed households with children. The basic problem is that our social attitudes about working mothers have changed faster than our institutions. AFDC was initially set up with the idea that mothers with small children should be encouraged to stay at home; they were felt to be more valuable in the home than at work. These attitudes about working mothers have changed, but it is difficult or impossible to implement our new attitudes in an economy without enough jobs to go around.

If we really object to income supports for mothers with dependent children, we will be in a position to implement that objection in a world of guaranteed jobs. AFDC welfare payments could be abolished and AFDC mothers could be absorbed into the guaranteed job program. (Some of them would of course be given guaranteed jobs working in day care centers.) At the moment, all programs to put AFDC mothers to work flounder because there are no jobs for them to be found.

Now let's turn to the "lazy." Sometimes I think that all attitudes about social policies spring from differences of opinion as to whether man is by nature fundamentally lazy or whether man is by nature a working, tool-building animal. If man is by nature lazy, and given the slightest opportunity will lay down his tools and quit working, then the world must be carefully structured to force him to work. While Western societies agreed several hundred years ago that no one should be allowed to starve to death on the streets, minimum support levels, it has been felt, must be kept so close to the extinction level that they attract no one. If, on the other hand, man is a working animal, substantial income support levels can be offered without causing the human animal to retire from work activities. Given the opportunity to retire on one-half the median income, few would take advantage of the opportunity. Most of us set our goals higher than this and find work an intrinsic part of our nature.

While no one can know the proportions of lazy and working creatures among the human species until we have job opportunities for everyone, I personally fall into the camp that believes the lazy are few and far between. (I meet many people who are worried about the lazy, but few who will say that they are among the lazy.) This leads me to advocate a negative income tax program with a guarantee level at about half of the median income, because this is the most human and administratively easy way to pick up those individuals who really cannot work. They should not have to go through the administratively costly and potentially demeaning experience of proving that they are disabled by age or health.

At the same time, however, I am willing to make a short-run compromise with those who believe that the human species is fundamentally lazy. If we really instituted a guaranteed job program of the nature outlined, I would be willing to abolish all possible sources of welfare for the able-bodied. In the world of the guaranteed job "no work, no eat" is not an impossible dictum. In the current world it is simply absurd. In the long run, I suspect we would discover that most human animals are not lazy, and a generous negative income tax program could be instituted without huge cost and with some substantial gain in the treatment of the "deserving poor."

Conclusions

HISTORICALLY, one of the interesting things to observe about our economy and our political structure is that we find it much easier to set up welfare programs to give people money than to set up work programs to

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give people work. Our public rhetoric would lead you to believe the opposite.

Those on welfare almost universally say they would prefer work to welfare. Yet we deliver money; not jobs. (Transfer payments were $140 billion in 1974.) At the same time we are not willing to give enough money to achieve equity. If an equitable distribution of economic resources is ever to be achieved, it will require the provision of jobs for everyone who wants to work.

Politically, we are reluctant to give jobs, because to do so would require a major restructuring of the economy. A new source of competition would arise for both public agencies and private firms. To the extent that we were unable or unwilling to hold the private economy at the full-employment level, we would have the beginnings of a socialized economy.

The time has come, however, to admit that the pursuit of equity and equal economic opportunity demands a fundamental restructuring of the economy. Everyone who wants to should have a chance to work. Equity demands it. But there is no way to achieve it by marginally tinkering with current economic policies. The only solution is a socialized sector of the economy designed to give work opportunities to everyone who wants them and cannot find them elsewhere in the economy. □

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Richard Pevear

Language and Resistance

Thoughts on the Russian Dissident Movement

The Russian poet Varlam Shalamov spent almost 25 years in Soviet prisons and labor camps, 17 of them in Kolyma, for "counter-revolutionary activities." One of his *Kolyma Stories,* published here under the title "Lend-Lease Comes to a Soviet Camp" (these stories have not been published in the Soviet Union but have circulated in *samizdat*), tells about the arrival, during the war years, of an American bulldozer in one of the Kolyma mining camps and about the first use it was put to. Those who have read the story will not have forgotten it, but I want to quote a few paragraphs from it here at the beginning: they contain, in language of a higher order, most of what I hope to bring together in these pages.

The prisoners imagine that the bulldozer will be a help to them in the backbreaking work of *trelling*—dragging and stacking logs by hand. But for some time their work goes on as before, with the one exception that they are led out to the work site along a much more roundabout and arduous path. Finally, one morning the bulldozer is put into operation. The prisoners watch it climb a terrace and move off down the old work-road, which happens to go past the camp cemetery. And the narrator says,

> . . . now I saw and understood. I thanked God for giving me the time and strength to see this.
>
> The mountain slope was stripped bare. The snow, still not deep enough, was blown away by the wind. The last of the tree stumps were uprooted. Dynamite charges set under the biggest stumps sent them flying. The smaller ones were uprooted with crowbars and still smaller ones were simply pulled out by hand. Thus the mountain was stripped bare and converted into a gigantic stage for the performance of a concentration camp mystery play.
>
> A stone pit, the common prison grave, full of preserved corpses, had been reopened by the disappearance of the topsoil. The bodies had slid down the mountain slope, revealing the secret of Kolyma.
>
> In Kolyma dead bodies are not committed to earth but to Stone. Stone is more reliable than earth, especially when fortified by Permafrost. It both preserves and exposes secrets. Each of our dear ones who had perished in Kolyma, each who had been shot or beaten to death, or wasted away from hunger, might have been identified decades later. There were no gas ovens in Kolyma. Corpses lay waiting in the doubly hardened realm of Stone and Permafrost.
>
> . . . Neither the Stone nor the North would let the corpses into their womb. Finally, yielding to force, defeated and humiliated, the Stone had promised to keep its secret, but harsh winters, hot summers, the winds and the rain, at work for six years, had wiped away the secret by casting the corpses forth from the Stone. The earth had opened its mouth to reveal its underground storerooms. In Kolyma not only gold was hidden, not only lead, wolfram, and uranium, but also preserved human bodies.
>
> . . . Then I remembered putting out grass fires and, by contrast, the intense blooming of the *taiga* in summer, whose foliage together with the grass may hide all human actions, good or bad. I remembered that grass is more forgetful than man. If I forget, surely grass will. But Stone and Permafrost will not.

The bulldozer's first job in Kolyma is, in fact, to excavate a new mass grave and shovel these

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exposed corpses into it and out of sight. The prisoners watch this work being done, and they notice the look of "pride and satisfaction" on the driver's face as the machine turns and roars back past them—"not a scratch, not a mark on its mirrorlike knife."

In the moment of greatest danger, the danger of forgetting, which threatens the prisoners themselves, that is, which comes not only from the forced silence that surrounds them but from their own human weakness—the earth "opens its mouth." It speaks the dead out of the ground. That is the *word* of this plain account that deepens into a legend. In it we can see a commentary on the alliance of industrial and state power against the people; a foreshadowing of the inevitable détente between the United States and the Soviet Union and what that implies; the revealing of a mysterious bond between the earth and exposed humanity. Like every good story, it speaks in the language of images, our approximation to what Leskov called "the voice of Nature," and it is memorable precisely because it does not explain itself. But while the substance of the story is of most concern, we might ask what resources Shalamov drew on for the telling of it. The old art of storytelling has almost disappeared in our time. To have recovered it after 17 years in Kolyma is something more than remarkable.

II

In this country, the state-idea, the image of the Republic, has been the one unifying force in our short history. But this country is an exception. In Russia the Slavic people, to speak only of that one among the many nationalities of the Soviet Union, have seen the rise of a number of states and have also seen their fall. Pares wrote, in his *History of Russia:*

> . . . it is the bottom of Russia, not the top . . ., that has in the long run decided not only the economic but the political life of the state. Any record which does not take account of it must inevitably be inconsequent and unintelligible. It is necessary to seize at the outset this conception so strongly suggested by the beginnings of Slavonic history, that the history of states may be something very different from the history of peoples, and that, however little chronicled, it is, in the long run, the history of peoples that counts.

If the chronicles of the ruling powers are the repository of state history, what is the repository of the history of peoples?

American speech has produced some lasting works. But there are few even among the best of them that do not have an air of colonial self-consciousness, as if they were products of a gift for mimicry, not of the deep life of language. American speech is not yet wise. And only with great difficulty, in the present circumstances, can it move closer to wisdom. For that reason alone we might well listen to what Russian speech has said. Speech is the repository of the history of peoples; not official language, but speech rooted in dialects and in the inventions that accompany different kinds of work—what Valéry called "that perpetually active poetry which harasses the rigid vocabulary, expands or contracts the meaning of words, works on them by symmetries or conversions, constantly altering the values of this legal tender . . ."

In its perpetual activity, speech embodies the inner life, the cultural life, of a people. And it makes a striking contrast to the will to fixity embodied in the state-idea. The attempt to control the life of language has been one of the constant attributes of political tyranny in this century. And the one struggle that may be said to underlie all struggles against tyranny in our time is the struggle for freedom of language. Freedom of language is not the same as freedom of speech, a right guaranteed by some constitutions and denied by some dictators. Freedom of speech is a blank check; one can be free to speak and have nothing to say. The struggle for freedom of language is an inner struggle to bring meaning to words, as the Russian dissidents have shown over the past 15 years. One way to approach an understanding of the dissident movement in Russia, a way that might free it of the misconceptions it has met with in the West, is to ask why such a movement should be so deeply involved

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with language, and precisely with the language of poetry.

Russian speech developed slowly, and anonymously over a long period, into a language that is rich in works and, in its native way, wise. It has been the one voice of a culture that has never entered into institutions or become a politics. The Russians might, like the people of southwestern France in the early Middle Ages, define themselves as the people of a language.

> We will preserve you, Russian speech,
> From servitude in foreign chains,
> Keep you alive, great Russian word,
> Fit for the songs of our children's children,
> Pure on their tongues, and free.

These lines end what seems to be a straightforward patriotic poem, written by Anna Akhmatova in 1942. It behooved one to be patriotic during the Great Fatherland War, and it was one of the rare occasions when Akhmatova was allowed to print her work. But the real strength of these lines, and their surprise, comes from their two-way defiance. According to an old story, in the 8th century the Kievan Slavs sent a fine, two-edged sword as part of a tribute payment to the Khazars, their oppressors. The Khazar prince understood the message, and perhaps the Soviet officials understrood Akhmatova.

The Russian language, Mandelstam wrote in his essay "On the Nature of the Word," is Hellenistic in character.

> The word in the Hellenistic conception is flesh, active, and permitted entry into the event. For that reason, the Russian language is historical in itself, since in its totality it is a surging sea of events, an unbroken incarnation and the action of wise and breathing flesh.

And further on, he says:

> For Russia the defection from history, the excommunication from the kingdom of historical necessity and succession, from freedom and expediency, would be a defection from language. The "dumbness" of two or three generations could lead Russia to a historical death. Excommunication from language for us is tantamount to excommunication from history.

Nothing could better express the exigency to which the dissident movement has responded. The Russian people have faced something more than the loss of personal freedoms, and for the same reason the opposition of the dissidents cannot be seen only as a struggle to regain those freedoms. They are of the third generation whose dumbness would mean historical death, the loss of their past and of the inner freedom of their language. Not even the right to free speech can restore a dumb man's voice.

Mandelstam's theme in his essay is the "unity of Russian literature," by which he means the enduring elements of Russian existence. It is an attack on the evolutionary point of view applied to literary history, the idea that a writer works "to clear the road of those who preceded him." But in making that attack, without touching on politics, Mandelstam was nevertheless taking aim at one of the fixed dogmas of the Soviet regime, the insistence that a new reality had been brought in by the Revolution, a reality that summed up the past in itself and thereby canceled it. What can be changed may well need to be changed. The political order can be changed. But reality does not change, and the nature of oppression does not change. The absurd term "Soviet reality," which is used to condemn unwanted people and unwanted writings ("they do not fit our new, Soviet reality"), speaks for one of the novelties of modern political theory and practice, one that is not limited to the Soviet Union or to a particular period of its history: the editing of reality, which has meant the editing out of whole sections of the population, to fit an idea. At the same time it speaks for something very old, even primeval: the force of the demonic, the crushing weight of myth. "Life has become better and gayer," Stalin said in a famous speech in 1937. What is implied in that statement is not a change in reality but an exhaustion of language.

III

Mythification and power are intimately related, whether the myth embodies power or

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disguises it. A person can be enslaved only when he is inwardly in a condition to accept slavery. Complete submission to an idea is already a form of slavery, and can easily be followed by submission to the person or party or state said to embody the idea. Revolutionary discipline, in that case, may not be very different from the discipline the offending state imposes on its subjects. An idea is a provisional construction, a tool like a wrench or a screwdriver, unless it is made into a myth. The use of the power of myths to control the people is characteristic of modern state-politics. It brings about the most primitive social conditions, enabling the state to extract huge tributes from the people and to submit them to the most useless sacrifices. State myths are imposed by a corrupt use of language. Only in extreme cases, or as a result of its own inexperience, does a state have to resort to physical force. But the events of the past 200 years ought to have taught us that the power of myths cannot be fought with the corrupted language of myths. One myth exchanged for another is not liberation.

It has generally been assumed that the progress of civilization has been a movement out of superstition and toward the rule of reason. Experience, however, has made the citizen of the 20th century question that assumption. The dialectic is much more complicated; the past was not so superstitious; the present is far from reasonable. Time after time we have let the world fall into the possession of demonic forces, but our very way of thinking has made us less and less able to recognize the nature of those forces and the right way to combat them. We have forgotten some of the oldest secrets of our culture, among them the tricks of disenchantment. A list of these stratagems was set down by Walter Benjamin in an essay on Leskov called "The Storyteller." It amounts to an outline of the methods of popular revolt:

> Whenever good counsel was at a premium, the fairy tale had it, and where the need was greatest, its aid was nearest. This need was the need created by the myth. The fairy tale tells us of the earliest arrangements that mankind made to shake off the nightmare which the myth had placed upon its chest. In the figure of the fool it shows us how mankind "acts dumb" toward the myth; in the figure of the youngest brother it shows us how one's chances increase as the mythical primitive times are left behind; in the figure of the man who sets out to learn what fear is it shows us that the things we are afraid of can be seen through; in the figure of the wiseacre it shows us that the questions posed by the myth are simple-minded, like the riddle of the sphinx; in the shape of the animals which come to the aid of the child in the fairy tale it shows that nature is not merely subservient to the myth, but much prefers to be aligned with man. The wisest thing—so the fairy tale taught mankind in olden times, and teaches children to this day—is to meet the forces of the mythical world with cunning and high spirits.

That demonic myths are a nightmare and an intolerable weight bearing down on the life of mankind was once understood; so, too, were the ways of breaking their power. What explains our loss of that understanding? Perhaps it resulted from the separation of active intellect, of an intelligentsia, from the common culture of the people and the waning of that culture under the influence of commercial and ideological civilization. But an explanation is not what I am after right now. My reason for recalling this passage from Benjamin is that it embodies, with a remarkable likeness, a series of recognitions that the Russian dissidents have come to in their struggle with the state, recognitions both of the nature of the struggle and of the best ways of undertaking it. In their acts and writings they have drawn once again from the oldest, the most forgotten layers of common experience. And that, in turn, throws light on the particular character of Russian culture and its submerged history. An unexpected strain of high spirits runs through the writings of Nadezhda Mandelstam, Andrei Sinyavsky, Joseph Brodsky, Andrei Amalrik, and even through the chronicles of *Gulag Archipelago*. These works have thrown off the burden of myth-enforcement; they speak a disenchanted language.

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IV

Poetry has little meaning apart from other human activities, which are its nourishment. But other activities lose their meaning when they are isolated from poetry, which is the pollen that turns events into experience. Work without poetry is drudgery, or forced labor. Poetry that has no connection with work is a sterile competition, for rewards that must become more and more tangible, like the rewards of power. Meaning is in relationship.

Language seems to have confronted its own speechlessness for the first time in the industrial cities of the 19th century. And the recent tradition of urban poetry owes its existence largely to the work of Baudelaire, who understood the crisis and devised a strategy to meet it. His point was not to resist the overwhelming novelty of modern urban existence—its pastlessness, its crowded anonymity, its violent contrasts of wealth and squalor—but to lose himself, freely and knowingly, in that alien world, to undergo its shocks, to become its typical figure. Kafka used the same strategy; Brecht used it in the "asphalt cities" of Berlin and Munich in the '20s. Brecht and Mandelstam, who would seem to have little in common, shared an admiration for Villon, who was a prototype of the urban poet (the only others were perhaps some of the poets of imperial Rome). And the Mandelstam of *Tristia* was himself a poet immersed in the life of a city, his demonic Petersburg.

Language was no more prepared than people were for life in the industrial cities. Baudelaire's greatness was that he recognized how deeply both were threatened by silence in the face of the incommensurable, and that he found a way of overcoming it. It was a negative way, and that is worth thinking about, because for it to be a *way* at all and not merely a surrender it had to bring its opposite with it, even if the opposite should remain unnamed. For the first time the places traditionally assigned to the ideal, the true, the good in poetry were filled by strange silences, by gaps in the text. Negative figures: the seven old men, the swan wandering in the rubble of a building project, the blind men ("What are they looking for in the sky?"), and so many more in Baudelaire's work, testify to an absence that is the part of experience in the great urban centers. The task that Baudelaire took upon himself is beautifully suggested in two lines from *Le Cygne:* "The old Paris is no more (the shape of a city/Changes, alas, more quickly than the human heart)". How complex it was, he has indicated by the one word that animates the lines, the word "alas." Confronting each other within him were the forces of renovation (which means oblivion) embodied in the city and the fertile memory that was the sign and burden of his humanity. He allowed the "modern" its compulsive fascination, but not its triumph. Alongside *Le Voyage* which ends with the cry: "To the depths of the Unknown to find the *new*!" must be set the short, untitled poem that begins, "I have not forgotten . . ." He made a poetry out of that struggle without resolving it, but without letting it fly apart.

But that was not his only struggle. The negative way can be a *way* only on condition that the poet, lost in the crowd, keeps hold of his right to see everything and to say everything. Baudelaire fought that battle with the censors of Napoleon III in 1857, and we would have to say that he won. Only six poems were suppressed from *Les Fleurs du Mal.* In the 1930s the Soviet state banned all of Mandelstam's work, arrested and exiled the poet, and finally killed him.

Mandelstam was silenced by the state in another way, however, before his work was banned. For five years, from 1926 to 1930, he lost his poetic voice. The joining of a doctrine of equality and justice with its most brutal denial in fact, makes defense against force particularly difficult for its victims. Nadezhda Mandelstam wrote in her memoirs about the decisive part played in the subjugation of the intelligentsia "not by terror and bribery (though, God knows, there was enough of both), but by the word 'Revolution,' which none of them could bear to give up." That was true to an extent even of Mandelstam. To recover his voice, he had to free himself of the demonic logic of the state and accept the role

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of outcast and victim that was to be his in the years of Stalin's terror. But it must be added, for the sake of human understanding, that even in those years there were moments, "always accompanied by a nervous state, as though he were under hypnosis," when Mandelstam doubted himself and was afraid that the Revolution was passing him by.

Mikhail Aksenov, a self-exiled member of the dissident movement, said in an interview with Irina Kirk:

> Mandelstam was asked many times why he didn't emigrate. And he used to say, "I can't. For me emigration is not a question of changing a place of residence; for me emigration is the question of escaping from my fate." He sensed his predestination to be sacrificed.

Baudelaire's negative way was also a way of self-sacrifice for the sake of common humanity, in opposition to the nonhuman forces that dominated his era. Mandelstam himself referred to Baudelaire as "an ascetic, in the most authentic sense of the word *martyre*." But his was more of a figurative and willed martyrdom, a source and subject of poetry. Mandelstam did not want to be a martyr; nothing, in fact, could have been more foreign to him; but events left him no choice but self-sacrifice in the most literal sense. And there is a corresponding difference in Mandelstam's later poetry. What takes shape there is as far from Baudelaire's fallen world as his voice is free of Baudelaire's self-torment. It is a view of the world and of human existence released from the weight of myth, minutely detailed, integral, filled with presence:

> And the notched paw of the maple
> Bathes in the round angles,
> And from the spots of butterflies
> One can compose drawings on the walls.
> There are mosques that are alive,
> And now I have guessed it:
> Perhaps we are the Hagia Sophia
> With a numberless multitude of eyes.

It was that vision of the "house of the world," and not only his personal courage, that made Mandelstam's example so important for the dissident movement.

V

Soviet repression works by a complex system of betrayal, in which it attempts to implicate as many people as it can. By attacking the loyalty between friends, or simply between fellow human beings, it strengthens loyalty to the state. It is characteristic of state power generally that it attempts, as Simone Weil put it, "to break all the bonds that could, outside the sphere of public life, provide a goal for the exercise of loyalty." A state that has increased in power to the extent that it has been able to turn the crowd of Baudelaire's time into a disciplined body of subjects leaves no room for a Baudelaire to maneuver in. He could work as he did only because he was left a marginal territory of disorder, of the anonymous or the not-yet-organized, a space for private meaning, the gratuitous, dandyism, the extraordinary claim of Kierkegaard that the individual is higher than the universal. If the state takes over that territory as well, it leaves only the choice between opposition and surrender. To put it another way, such a state, ironically, collectivizes its opposition; that is, it raises the question of community in a new and urgent way.

Surrender, on the other hand, leads to a bureaucratic assimilation of the realm of language, to the creation of a "union of writers" administered by the state, to the isolation of a "writing function" or "writing profession" (and it should be said that something of the same effect can be achieved without the explicit bureaucratic apparatus by the commercializing of the realm of language). The writing function consists in the production of well-made works for general consumption, works that are part pure comestibles, part an ideological engineering of souls. These products are, despite a certain variety, alike in one thing: in them existence is unrecognizable; in them the relationship between language and the world appears to have been dissolved. Mandelstam characterized such works as "a competition of inventions for the improvement of some kind of literary machine, it being unknown where the judges are hiding or what purpose the

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machine serves." Vacant professionalism, because of the power of money, has always been a threat to the life of American speech. But nothing is more contrary to the tradition of Russian literature. Edward Dahlberg was right to accuse those who write for money or prestige of "stealing the genius of the people," and to define that genius as "the will to resist evil." The dissident writer Andrei Amalrik has said of the cultural sector in the Soviet Union:

> I sometimes think that the Soviet "creative intelligentsia"—that is, people accustomed to thinking one thing, saying another, and doing a third—is as a whole an even more unpleasant phenomenon than the regime that gave it birth. Hypocrisy and the acceptance of things as they are foisted on it have become so much a part of it that it considers any attempt to act honorably as either a crafty provocation or madness . . . . Not everyone can come out openly against the conditions in which we live and maybe that is not always the best method. But it is always better to be silent than to utter falsehoods, better to refuse to publish any of your books than to put out something which is completely contrary to what one had written in the beginning, better to refuse a trip abroad than to become an informer through it or to "report" by means of a false poem, better to refuse a press conference than to declare publicly that creative freedom exists in our country. If an individual person or even the whole country actively wanted to be free, they must achieve freedom somehow, even if it be by means of non-co-operation with their oppressors. But sometimes to obtain this one must risk even the freedom one has . . . .

This passage is from an open letter addressed to a Russian writer, one who had adopted the strategy of accepting the conditions imposed on him by the state and doing what was asked of him, though secretly he despised the authorities he served, and who was rewarded with permission to travel to the West, where he defected. Though this strategy has a certain kind of cleverness about it, it has no connection with Baudelaire's negative way. Instead of exposing the writer to the experiences of common humanity, it protects him from them; instead of the freedom of language, it brings him privileges of a highly suspect variety. And the price he must pay is the betrayal of his fellow men or of conscience, acceptance of a part in the perpetration of untruths and the glorification of power, the dividing of himself into one who speaks and one who is silent.

There is no clearer example of the breaking of bonds between people than the Soviet system of betrayal, which goes beyond collective submission to corrupt the innermost life of each person, that is, to isolate each person from himself. It is an unremitting act of force that reduces life to the most elementary moral choices. Alexander Yesenin-Volpin, considered the "father" of the dissident movement, suggests the nature of these choices in an interview with Irina Kirk. He talks about what he learned from his first arrest in 1949:

> The chief problem was not what they might do to you—that, strictly speaking, was not your affair. The point was to consider that one was finished, and that the question lay in the "quality" of such an end . . . . Of course, physically one might be alive, or perhaps one might not be—that was not the point. The point is this: that one single phrase that turns out to be treachery is much worse than ten years in camp.

The more elementary the choices, the more "spiritual" they become. It requires a constant struggle with oneself to resist the operation of a "law of history" that would emancipate productive forces by enslaving human beings and claim that the process was not willed but providential. Baudelaire, who was forever exhorting himself, wrote once in his diary, with a mixture of innocence and self-deprecating humor: "To be a great man and a saint *for one's own sake*, that is all that matters." Solzhenitsyn wrote, in the second book of *Gulag Archipelago*: "How difficult it is, how difficult it is, to become a human being."

VI

The Russian dissidents, Irina Kirk wrote in the preface to *Profiles in Russian Resistance*, "had no leaders, no manifestos, no political

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philosophy. In this sense there was no specific movement, if one understands a movement to be a definite structure with organizing principles and a political ideology." The apparent aimlessness of their dissent, the lack of a program and even of any real hope of reforming the Soviet state, has puzzled Western radicals, who are more conventionally political, and has led to some bitter and confused accusations; for example, that the dissidents are reactionaries who want a return to czarism, that they are crypto-fascists or tools of capitalist imperialism. Yesenin-Volpin is aware of the dissidents' complicated position with regard to the West. He says, in the same interview:

> . . . I must underline, especially as I live abroad, that I am in no way a partisan of the pre-Revolutionary regime. Had I lived before the Revolution, undoubtedly I would have fought not for socialism but for notions of an anarchic order, in the spirit of Kropotkin and Bakunin. Only I would have occupied an independent position—I would not have identified anarchism with socialism. I would not have divided the world into the right and the left—the stupidest of divisions, losing any meaning after a 180-degree turn . . . . That is the turn that Russia took in the course of the Revolution.

But, as he implies, Western Marxists and socialists are also put in a complicated position by the Russian dissidents, one in which ideological adherence and the very liberties the adherents would establish are strangely opposed. Attempts to resolve these difficulties by righteous indignation simply will not work. Günter Grass, for example, criticized Andrei Sinyavsky recently for associating himself with the magazine *Kontinent*, because it is supported by a right-wing German publisher. Yet he allows his own books to be printed in the Soviet Union, where the state is the only publisher. Solzhenitsyn has been more crudely attacked, not only for playing into the hands of Western propagandists, but, for example, for failing to distinguish between those who were killed for the right reasons in the early years of the Revolution and those who were wrongly killed by Stalin. He has also been accused of harboring pro-Nazi sentiments, and even of personal greed; he has been called a "Mickey Mouse of the bourgeoisie" and a "Russian McCarthyist." As for Amalrik, it was once suggested that he was an agent of the KGB. The accusations testify to the importance of words in modern politics. But a politics of words is a politics that tends to talk itself to death.

Of course, any exiled Russian who publicly criticizes the Soviet regime can be said to have served the interests of the capitalist West. That can also be said of Bukovsky, Marchenko, Larisa Bogoraz, Natalia Gorbanevskaya, and the many other prisoners and exprisoners still in the Soviet Union who have managed to make their opposition known. But the conclusion of which these are the premises is an annihilating one. The same pattern has been repeated for too many years: repression consented to in the name of the struggle against repression; one form of tyranny overthrown and a new form of tyranny installed; the self-righteous ideologist doing with his left hand what he attacks with his right; the tactical shifting from a dogmatic rigidity that denounces the struggle for freedom for its lack of theory, to a realpolitik that denounces it for its idealism. If this long war has largely been a war of words, it has not been entirely so. Behind it the people have suffered and state power has increased. Words should reveal conditions, not determine them. The scholasticism of ideological controversy can serve the ends of power but not of liberation.

The political thought of the Russian dissidents varies widely, from true conservatism, through liberal-democratic reformism, to the hope for a rebirth of Leninism; from the vast changes proposed by Solzhenitsyn, through more modest calls for the recognition of human rights, to the pessimism of Amalrik. What draws these people together is not political agreement. It is a principle that Mandelstam presented, with some apprehension, in an essay entitled "Humanism and the Present," published in 1923:

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> There are epochs which contend that they care nothing for man, that he is to be used like brick or cement, that he is to be built with, not for. Social architecture is measured by the scale of man. At times it becomes inimical to man and feeds its own grandeur on his debasement and nullity . . . .
>
> But there also exists a different social architecture of which man is also the scale and measure, but which builds for man rather than with him . . . .

To build with man rather than for him is at heart a despairing thing, that is, a desperate thing. The tone of desperate insistence can be heard in the speeches and writings that defend it, because that very insistence debases the defenders who are also only men. The measure Mandelstam introduces is not politically determined, it is a measure *of* politics. In a passage that ought to make his critics reflect, Solzhenitsyn cries out against his "Russian fatherland that has always devoured its children." Soviet socialism, German fascism, Western capitalism—which has been the greatest devourer of its children? It is by no means easy to throw off the weight of this age; it is even the hardest thing to do. But that is, at the deepest point, what the Russian resistance is about.

Something much larger is going on than can be contained in the terms of 19th-century revolutionary thought. It is the surrender of the world to what Heidegger has called "the uniformity of the will-to-will." For that reason, the contradictions raised by the Russian dissidents are not incidental difficulties, to be explained away or to be thrown back at them; they are the very thing we need to understand. To attempt to resolve them by applying to them the old absolutes of the struggle for power is to surrender again. What is asked of us, instead, is that we fashion a provisional language, concrete and self-critical, suited to local applications, which will not trap people into consenting to what, under another name, are the very evils they are fighting against.

VII

Power is a persuasive illusion. It is always possible to seize power, but that act of power cannot, even eventually, lead to freedom or justice. What, on the other hand, can a movement that has no leaders, no organization, no program, amount to? What can it hold up against the temptation of power, since it renounces power, if not an illusion that is even briefer and more questionable? In the second book of her memoirs, Nadezhda Mandelstam has included a long digression on freedom and license, which goes to the heart of these questions. It is based on some primary distinctions: "Freedom seeks meaning while license sets aims. Freedom is the triumph of the personality, but license is the product of individualism." It is a telling irony that the Russian Revolution should have brought about not a new sense of community among the people but the breakdown of all social relationships, the reduction of society to a mass of isolated individuals. But in fact the ideologists of the Revolution shared the basic assumptions of the capitalist autocracy they opposed, and spoke the same language. They could talk about what constitutes power, but they could not say what makes a community. The acts of the dissidents, on the other hand, are acts for the sake of community, and are self-fulfilling to the extent that in them the community already exists, in however tenuous a form. This radical difference is the real issue.

Freedom is neither an end nor a means. In that case, what good is it? Why should people attach such a high price to something as quixotic as freedom? The answer to these questions cannot be improvised out of present-day concepts. If they have an answer, it is a living one, woven out of countless relationships; in other words, it is a communal answer, or what might have been called a cultural answer. A state that builds with man rather than for him has no use for freedom. The will-to-will uses mankind for vast projects of development and conquest because, in its emptiness, it cannot bring about the illusion of meaning in any other way. Its aims fill the void left by the destruction of the common culture of the people. Meaning belongs to another order of existence.

The language of that other order is the

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language of poetry. And true poetry is always found on the side of the people, if only because of its care for the life of speech. Nicholas I himself censored Pushkin's poetry—a tribute Pushkin could have done without. Commercial publishing has its own ways of censoring poetry. And the Soviet state has used various cruder methods. We should not be more concerned about the bad treatment of poets than we are about the bad treatment of other people. But the suppression of poetry is another matter, because it implies something more general: the suppression of free human communion, of the festive communion of a people with each other, with their past, with future generations. A poetic work exists by its own laws as a finished object, a construction. But it is not an object of value in itself, it is merely an instrument or occasion of human communion in a festive existence. The festivity of speech, which is also a festivity in time, cannot be controlled by the state. Therefore it cannot be allowed. A state that negates the past and would appropriate all forms of human relationship for itself cannot permit festal poetry to unite people in its own way, even in the solitude of one reader's mind. It cannot permit any festivity that is not a state festivity.

We ask why, and get no answer. The will-to-will is a blind force. It has no inner motive, and is therefore inscrutable. Simone Weil condensed a subtle portrait of the man of power into a single sentence: "Richelieu wanted to enslave people's very minds; not for his own benefit, for in his self-abnegation he was probably sincere; but for that of the state he represented." Which explains nothing. And that is the real explanation. The privilege of power is that it need not answer, but the truth of power is that it cannot answer.

VIII

In his poem *Crépuscule du soir,* Baudelaire described the night-world of 19th-century Paris, that swarming city: crime, prostitution, the luxurious pastimes of the rich, all that comes out at twilight—which is also:

> The hour when the sufferings of the sick grow sharper!
> Dark night takes them by the throat; they finish
> Their destiny and move towards the common pit;
> The hospital is filled with their sighs.—More than one
> Will not come again to seek his fragrant soup
> By the fire, at evening, beside a loved soul.
> Yet most of them have not known even
> The hearth's comfort, or ever really lived.

Naive lines, perhaps, but all the more remarkable for their repetition of that one image that is the opposite of the night-world and the degradation Baudelaire deliberately cultivated: the image of the hearth.

A century after Baudelaire published *Crépuscule du soir,* Pasternak wrote a poem that is related to it as closely as a photograph to its negative. The poem is called *Earth,* and appears, somewhat unexpectedly, among the religious poems of Zhivago. It begins as a description of spring coming to the city, of daylight and fresh air penetrating closets and attics, dissolving all difference between inside and outside, of pussywillows and gillyflowers on windowsills, at intersections, in streets and workshops. But the last two stanzas turn abruptly to the "earth outside the city" and end with a variant that is also an interpretation of the image of the hearth:

> Then why does the distance weep in mist,
> And why does black dirt smell so bitter?
> For that I have my special calling,
> To keep the open from being bored,
> To keep the earth outside the city
> From isolation and despair.
> That is why my friends and I
> Meet together in early spring,
> And of our evenings make farewells,
> And of our small feasts, testaments,
> So that the hidden stream of sorrow
> May lend some warmth to the chill of being.

It seems to me that one can see not only the spirit but almost the day-to-day lives of the Russian dissidents in these lines. That is, in

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the last six lines. But what of the other stanza? What is the relationship Pasternak implies in the ellipsis between the two stanzas?

The poem is difficult because it holds things strangely together. That is the nature of poetic speech. Language incapable of that kind of speaking leads, whether we will it or not, to divisions of consciousness and of activity, of which the divorce of reason from perception is only one example, the one most typical of an age dominated by myths. The earth of the poem is not simply the earth that is cultivated and harvested to feed the city, though it is that; it is the earth to whose laws human life itself is submitted, but which, through the intervention of language, is also filled with a living spirit, so that it too can be said to suffer from isolation and despair. The house of the world extends to include the earth outside the city, just as the earth in spring sends its life into human habitations. The two-way exchange Pasternak describes is the economy of the human order of existence. Maintaining it, he says, is the poet's special calling.

But there is another recognition in the poem, without which the first would have little meaning. A common misconception in political thinking attributes all human suffering and injustice to political conditions. A state may be tyrannical in its power, but that power does not belong to the state. The state is an outcome of the oldest human need: the need for mediation between the necessity of the universe and the exposed condition of mankind. People come together, most literally, for warmth, for shelter against storms, hunger, random destruction. The house is the beginning of the city, and the hearth is the center of the house. But the state may not only be the final outcome of this human need, but also its ultimate perversion. The state is cold, its touch is metallic, but it takes its coldness from the "chill of being." It is possible for the state to kill a man because men are mortal, not because the state is omnipotent. A tyrannical state is a reversed thing; it exposes its people to cold, hunger, random destruction; in other words, it attaches no more value to their lives than the force of necessity does. It learns to speak the language of necessity, and the more it learns, the colder it becomes and the further removed from mediation. It acquires the momentum of a dead weight moving in a vacuum, a momentum that can have no regard for people and that overwhelms even those who presume to guide it. "Looking back at the entire 19th century of Russian culture . . .," Mandelstram wrote at the end of *The Noise of Time,* "I see in it the unity lent it by the measureless cold which welded decades together into one day, one night, one profound winter, within which the terrible State glowed, like a stove, with ice." The character Vasily sees a similar prospect for the future, in Sinyavsky's story "Iced-over."

Human beings are exposed not only to the force of the universe, which all creatures are exposed to, but to the knowledge of its inflexible laws, to a weight and a violence that are suffered in spirit. The house of the world, then, is *not* a chicken coop or a crystal palace. The warmth it needs is not the kind supplied by central heating. Festivity, in the last lines of *Earth,* is itself the hearth. All of these words are metaphors, because of the peculiar economy of our existence. Our common needs are the root of politics. Festivity *was* the polis. It is possible to make the polis into a termite-state without contradicting the laws of nature.

But that is not, and never was, the point. It means rather that the oldest need, the need for mediation, has been forgotten. The state has no other power than necessity, the real source of all mythical power, which it receives from the universe and turns as a weapon against the people. The power of the state represents, in human terms, not a triumph but an abject surrender. Against that surrender the dissidents have met together, in proximity to "the hidden stream of sorrow," for the sake of warmth. That is the only difference, the only true choice, in a universe ruled by necessity. The universe does not need that warmth, mankind needs it. The universe does not need justice and offers no models of it. Mankind needs justice. Justice is not inherent in any political order, because any political order

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can be subverted. Only the felt need for justice can bring a measure of justice.

IX

Logic and reason alone will always side with necessity. The warmth of the hearth, on the other hand, is generated by the very folly of opposing the indifference of the universe. Reason would not lead that way, any more than reason would lead a person to oppose the Soviet state. But folly has always had a special place in Russian thought. Mikhail Aksenov, talking with Irina Kirk about Pasternak, referred to Zhivago as a *yurodivy,* a "saintly fool," and said:

> Here Pasternak goes back to the deepest roots not only of Russian literature but of the Russian concept of human nature and religion. *Yurodstvo* is a protest against the meaninglessness of the world. And in this particular case the revolutionary reality appears as a total objectification of the meaninglessness that kills human beings.

Folly can be sacrificial, as it was for Pasternak and for Mandelstam. But it also has its share of cunning and high spirits. It is touched by the particular radiance of disenchantment.

The same radiance surrounds the simplest objects when they are drawn into the economy of the household. Meaning does not descend from above, according to the law of gravity; it is built up from below, in defiance of gravity, consecrated by human needs and human uses. Mandelstam wrote, about the work of Innokenty Annensky:

> The lesson of Annensky's creation for Russian poetry is not Hellenization, but internal Hellenism, adequate for the spirit of the Russian language; one might call it a domestic Hellenism. Hellenism is a kettle, a pair of oven tongs, a milk jug, a domestic utensil, dishes, all the familiar bodies; Hellenism is the warmth of the hearth, which is sensed as sacred; it is every bit of clothing which is placed on any shoulder, and with that same feeling of sacred trembling with which
>
> As the swift river froze
> And wintry blizzards raged,
> We covered with a furry hide
> The sainted old man.
>
> Hellenism is the conscious surrounding of man with utensils instead of indifferent objects; it is the transformation of these objects into utensils, the humanization of the surrounding world, the warming of it with the most delicate teleological warmth. Hellenism is any little oven around which a man sits and appreciates the warmth as if it were kindred to his own inner warmth. Finally, Hellenism is the funeral boat of the Egyptian dead in which everything necessary for the continuation of the terrestrial travel of man is placed, even including the scent jar, the mirror, and combs. Hellenism is the system, in the Bergsonian sense of the word, which a man opens around himself like a fan of phenomena which have been liberated from temporal dependence, and which have been co-ordinated by an inner relationship through the human I.

This passage, from "On the Nature of the Word," brings together under an appropriate name all that is threatened by the power of the state. It is an inventory of the provisional constructions of mankind, which, like justice, and like speech itself, are mediations.

Knowledge of these things, which have all but disappeared from the world, seems to have been entrusted to the Russian people and their language. It is a knowledge closely linked to the spirit of legends and the tricks of disenchantment. Nothing, it might be said, has been so well prepared for in the depths of Russian history as the return of that spirit in a time of extreme need. The people of the dissident movement have a long ancestry; otherwise their strength would be hard to account for. A man like Vladimir Bukovsky, who is now serving a twelve-year sentence (his fourth imprisonment) for protesting the abuses of psychiatry for political repression, might have stepped out of the pages of Leskov—Leskov, of whom Tolstoi, who admired his work, said that he was "the first to point out the inadequacy of economic progress"; Leskov, who was renounced by the left and attacked by the right in his own time because he could not take sides; Leskov, whose work more than that of any other Russian writer breathes the spirit of legends and is rooted in native speech.

"'Magically escaped' are the beings that

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lead the procession of Leskov's creations." So wrote Walter Benjamin. Escaped from what? From the inertia of the universe, which afflicts the human heart; from the fatality of evil, which is akin to the force of gravity. It is only in this sense that the phrase "magically escaped" can refer to the Russian dissidents. That many of them are now in exile is another matter—not a magic escape but an extreme misfortune, accepted only in the face of an even more extreme repression. There are others who have refused exile, or who are unable to choose because they are in prison, to whom the phrase applies equally well. Bukovsky's mother said, of the example her son has been to her, "I was always a hen, and suddenly in my house there grew an eagle"—a very Leskovian sentence. It would be trivial to associate the acts of a man like Bukovsky with mere literature. But Mandelstam has already spoken of the Russian word as "flesh, active, and permitted entry into the event," which is perhaps the best way to understand the historical continuity of the spirit, embodied now in the flesh and now in the word, that stands behind the dissident movement. □

Note

"Lend-Lease Comes to a Soviet Camp," by Varlam Shalamov, appeared in *Dissent*, Summer 1974, translated by Mark Liwszyc. Of the two essays by Mandelstam, "On the Nature of the Word" was published in *Malahat Review*, No. 32, October 1974, translated by John M. Gogol, and "Humanism and the Present" was published in Clarence Brown's *Mandelstam* (New York, 1973). The poem by Mandelstam quoted in section IV is from "Vos'mistishiya" (1932-35), translated by Clarence Brown in *Delos*, 1968. Andrei Amalrik's "Open Letter to A. Kuznetsov" appears in the paperback edition of *Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984?* (New York, 1971). The poem by Akhmatova quoted in section II was translated by Stanley Kunitz and Max Hayward in *Poems of Akhmatova* (Boston, 1973). Passages from interviews with Irina Kirk are from her book *Profiles in Russian Resistance* (New York, 1975). □

Kim Chi-ha

2 a.m.

2 a.m. is an awkward time
You can neither fall asleep
Nor splash cool water onto your face
Nor read a book
You're too tired for fantasies
Too ashamed to shuffle about.

Too ashamed to be eating things
Before your hungry cell mates'
Too ashamed of your own self
To be mumbling away.
Just too ashamed, but
How are you to lie still?

Nothing at all you can do
It's 2 a.m.
An awkward time
Today's time.
Our time.

Kim Chi-ha is a South Korean poet who has repeatedly been harassed by the government of his country for writing critically. After a period of arrest, he was released last February, only to be rearrested the following month and imprisoned "in a dark space of 1.7 pyeng" (the size of a small table). He has been denied all contact with the outside world, and allowed neither exercise nor reading matter. This translation, by J. de Yepes, is taken from Index, *the splendid English journal that chronicles violations of freedom in all–repeat, all–countries.* —EDS.

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Erazim Kohák

European Communists & European Defense

With this article by a member of the Dissent *editorial board we continue our discussion of recent changes in the European Communist parties. Is their recent espousal of democracy genuine? What is their attitude toward European defense? Which tactics should European Socialists adopt toward them?*

Previous writers, offering different points of view, have included Bogdan Denitch, Dennis Wrong, and Irving Howe in the Fall 1975 Dissent *and other issues.* — EDS.

European Communist parties, for threescore years Stalin's vanguard, seem to be discovering democracy. Few Americans have noticed and fewer still are willing to trust the change. With reason—and yet, if genuine, the change could mark the end of an era, profoundly affecting Europe's conservative stance.

Europe's basic conservatism in recent decades has been largely a paradoxical product of the Communist parties' commitment to despotism. In Europe, as in America, a majority of the electorate has stood to the left of center ever since the war, producing such phenomena as Scandinavian socialism and the British welfare state. In those countries, however, where the accidents of history or the facts of economics enabled the Communists to attract a significant popular following, the story has been different.

The Communist refusal to accept the rules of democracy—and the Socialist refusal to accept their participation on those terms—had split the left-of-center electoral majority into parliamentary minorities. Should the Communists now be genuinely willing to participate in European political life, as partners in democracy rather than as the vanguard of despotism, this could change the entire complexion of European politics and make it far more difficult for the Soviets to hold on to their central European empire. East European Communists too would find Western Europe far more attractive than Russia if they saw there is room for them there.

There are reasons for caution, but there are also reasons to believe that such a democratization of Europe's major Communist parties is taking place. The initial impulse came, interestingly enough, from Europe's occupied eastern half. There, Communist parties brought to power by Soviet intervention discovered, after a generation of Soviet-style bloodletting, that the long-scorned "bourgeois" commitment to human rights and the democratic recognition of opposition parties are crucial both for building socialism and for the safety of the builders' necks. The recognition, to be sure, came too late to do them much good, for a revolution triumphing with Soviet aid becomes damnably permanent. In country after country—most recently in Czechoslovakia in 1968—Soviet tanks put a swift and brutal end to attempts at democratization. Waves of surviving "reform" Communists, sadder and in some cases even wiser, fled to the West. These new refugees brought a whiff of reality into the never-never land of Western Communist ideology in which

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Lenin's Byzantine notions had long survived untarnished. The spectacle of Communists, their comrades and erstwhile heroes, fleeing from the East, brought home to the Western Communists the point that a successful revolution might leave even their own necks dangerously exposed. Since the neck is a rather sensitive part of even a Communist's anatomy, this proved to be a powerful impetus for second thoughts.

There was another reason as well. The post-war expansion of the Soviet empire over half of Europe and its results gradually made the point that Europe, whatever it is, is not Russia. In Russia, Lenin, Stalin, and their successors had all the prerequisites for imposing their ideology after the manner of Oriental despots. Russia is heir to the Byzantine empire. For centuries, the principles of Russian social cohesion had been Byzantine—*pravoslavi i samoderzhavi*, orthodoxy and autocracy. Kerensky's forlorn attempt at liberalization was built on thin air. By contrast, Lenin's October *putsch* (now "The Great October Revolution"), which restored the principles of a rigid autocracy (now "democratic centralism") in the name of a holy orthodoxy (now "the scientific world view, Marxism-Leninism"), built on the bedrock of the Russian tradition.

But Europe is not Russia. Europe's cultural heritage is rooted in the democracy of ancient Greece with its conception of the state as a *polis*, the commonweal of free citizens rather than a chieftain's fief. Its other root is the ancient Roman conception of the human as endowed with intrinsic, individual rights. Fused by the Judeo-Christian conviction of the worth and dignity of the human, those ideals gave Europe a profoundly democratic, humanistic temper that Europeans reaffirmed again and again through centuries of struggle. When Stalin exported Lenin's Byzantine model of Communism to Europe there was no sigh of relief, not even among people who considered themselves Communists. There was silence, then resistance, reform, then repression and alienation. To be acceptable to Europeans, Communism would have to be recast within Europe's heritage of freedom and democracy.

For some 20 years, European Communists continued to hope that they could avoid such recasting by trusting Soviet might rather than their own popular acceptability to bring them to power. But, as Eastern Europe had shown that such help is undesirable, Portugal showed that it is also unavailable except in contiguous territories east of the Yalta line, at least until the Soviet Union feels strong enough to resume its stalled march to the Atlantic. Given the Soviet dependence on American wheat and the rising power of China, that might be a long, long time. West European Communists, who had long thought that the choice facing them was simply a tactical one—whether to seek Byzantine power by electoral or revolutionary means—discovered that the choice was rather different. They could cling to the Byzantine ideal and condemn themselves to perpetual, ineffectual opposition—or they could participate actively and effectively in political life, though at the cost of accepting the presuppositions of democracy.

A democratic turn, to be sure, does not represent a live option for Communist parties in countries where an awareness of Soviet realities, social and industrial maturity and/or an effective social democratic movement have deprived the Communists of any significant popular appeal. A Communist party in Britain, in Austria, or in Denmark has nothing to gain by turning democratic. Nothing will endear it to the voters: it might as well retain its revolutionary purity that at least attracts the intellectual Bolsheviks in the universities.

But the choice is real for those Communist parties that are able to command a significant popular following, as are the Italian, the French and, probably, the Spanish CPs. All three parties have given clear indications of their willingness to exercise the democratic option. It was the Italian Communist leader Togliatti who first criticized Stalin's Byzantine model of Communism from within. The party he once headed has repeatedly condemned Soviet domestic practice and international policies and has regularly given aid to the

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assorted reformers who have incurred Moscow's wrath. Recently, Soviet hopes for a Communist summit that would reaffirm the traditional role of European Communists as the docile vanguard of Soviet imperialism have been repeatedly frustrated by Italian insistence on autonomy and integrity of their party.

The frank defense of democracy by Western Communists at the 25th Congress of the Soviet CP in Moscow proved a time bomb that sent the Soviets scurrying to defend their supremacy (officially called "proletarian internationalism"). Mikhail Suslov even dusted off the unmentionable Mr. Zhdanov, Stalinist boss of the Cominform!

The change has been no less marked in domestic politics. The Italian CP, while still indulging in some revolutionary rhetoric, has turned vigorously to electoral politics. The range of opinion in its journals is far more reminiscent of the German Social Democratic press a century ago than of the monolithic drabness of Communist publications ten years after the war. On the local level, Italian Communists have scored significant electoral successes, yet their long-dreaded victories did not produce local red terror. Charged with the responsibilities of governing, the Communists have produced rather ordinary, reasonably honest, reasonably effective municipal administrations, socially sensitive and responsible. Even to many non-Communist Italians the change seems welcome after 30 years of entrenched conservative administrations kept in power less by conviction than by fear of the Communist alternative. At the moment, Italian Communists are clamoring for participation on the national level, protesting their devotion to the democracy within whose framework they are operating. In the joint Franco-Italian declaration, Marchais and Berlinguer, general secretaries of their respective parties, pledge allegiance to freedoms won by the "great bourgeois-democratic revolution" and speak of democracy as the condition of socialism in terms that once won Karl Kautsky the title of "Renegade."

Survivors of earlier Communist victories may, of course, be permitted a healthy dose of scepticism. There have been too many Popular Fronts. It is easy to be democratic while winning at the polls. The Czechoslovak Communist party, for instance, operated for years as a responsible party within a democratic framework, even forming a national government strictly by the rules. But when faced with a sharp decline in support in public opinion polls, the Czechoslovak CP used its position to stage an armed coup—and within a few weeks it reemerged as the most vicious and bloody of Europe's ruling Communist parties this side of Mother Russia.

The idea of democratic Communism cannot help but appear as a contradiction in terms. The rejection of democracy, after all, has been the major point distinguishing the Communists from the socialist movement. Nor was it simply a matter of tactics. The Communist is not, as the Communists were wont to claim in their Popular Front phases, simply a socialist in a hurry. Communist aims are fundamentally different. The socialists have consistently regarded socialism as essentially an economic extension of democracy in an industrialized society, justified as a reaffirmation of the European ideals of freedom and dignity under the strains of industrialization. The Communists have no less consistently rejected those ideals as "bourgeois" and have offered instead an "enlightened" despotism by the economically elect—though, with a logic only a Marxist can fathom, they regarded ideological purity as the mark of economic election. If Communism were to become democratic, not simply as a matter of tactics, but as an abdication of the Byzantine model in favor of a European, democratic one, they would lose all distinctness. It is not easy to convince oneself that such a change is really taking place.

Yet, such a change should be most welcome—and not at all surprising. It does represent the only possible happy ending to the challenge to the European humanitarian ideal posed a century ago by Karl Marx. Democracy cannot simply dismiss that challenge. While Communism may appear as a grotesque

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posturing in any socially and economically mature society, it does represent an articulation of the legitimate protest of the outcasts, both of the proletariat and of the intellectual aristocracy, in societies struggling to break the stranglehold of latent feudalism in the age of industrialization, as in the Germany of Karl Marx's time or in the Italy and Spain of our own era.

Democracy cannot simply surrender to such a claim. While Marxism may be a legitimate voice of protest, it is a philosophical primitivism, hopelessly inadequate for the complex task of balancing common weal and individual rights. But neither can democracy simply stifle, strangle, or eradicate it. Whenever democracy stifles a legitimate voice of protest, it dies no less surely than when it simply surrenders to it. Democracy's great strength and hope is its ability to incorporate voices of protest as responsible components within the democratic process.

That has, after all, happened before. Though today's Social Democrats may not care to remember it, the Social Democratic party in Germany a century ago was a radical revolutionary party, as ready to trample human rights in the name of a dictatorship of true believers as the bloodiest of today's Communists. It took Karl Kautsky quite a while to work his way to the honorable status of "Renegade Kautsky." But it was not Bismarck's antisocialist laws that made the Social Democratic party democratic; it was its electoral victories. Unable to win victories on the barricades—and thank God for that—the SPD turned to the ballot box. Germany's Social Democratic party became democratic as it acquired a vested interest in the democratic process.

Seen in that light, the successful Communist participation in Italian democratic politics is less a defeat for democracy than the only kind of victory democracy can wish for: the incorporation of its radical challengers within the basic democratic practice. Europe is not "going Communist" whenever another Communist major is elected. Rather, the Communists, long chained to the Byzantine ideal, may at long last be "going European." In the process, they may cause some problems and may make some valuable contributions, but, most of all, they may, at last, come of age.

Such a "mellowing of Communism" has represented the hopes and the wishful thinking of Western leftists all along, from the platitudes about "goulash Communism" down to self-deceptions about the nature of the *détente*. It was always a self-deception with respect to official Soviet Communism. That Communism is not the conviction of men and women, but the official ideology of *an empire*—and imperial ideologies cannot mellow without a decline of the empires. But it might not be a vain hope with respect to Western Communism, if the democratic turn of the European Communist parties is genuine.

Therein lies the rub: is it genuine? It is trivial to inquire about the sincerity of the men and women who proclaim that turn. Sincerity is cheap. A great many of the pre-1933 Nazis were genuinely, idealistically sincere. Some of them, like Röhm, paid for their sincerity with martyrdom, just like the sincere idealists who brought Communism to power in Eastern Europe. The criteria for evaluating the Communist "democratic turn" must be political rather than emotional. Some of the new converts to democracy in all likelihood do not "truly, sincerely believe" what they preach, others undoubtedly do. Be that as it may, sincerity is no guarantee against the corrupting effect of power. The crucial point is not whether the Communists now "sincerely believe," but whether they are prepared to accept the democratic rules of the game only as long as these serve their feelings and purposes—or whether they are prepared to work for their strengthening even against their own power ambitions.

That question is far less moot than the question of sincerity. The strength or weakness of European democracy, including the democratization of Europe's Communist parties, is directly proportionate to Europe's ability to shelter its political development against the pressure of Russian might. It is clear enough what the Soviet empire stands for. There Communist reformers end up on the

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gallows—unless they succeed in escaping to the West. The present Soviet regime may be less effective than that of Lenin and Stalin, but it is no less autocratic in its commitment and practice. The Russian shadow over Europe is the most ominous threat to European democracy.

That, to be sure, is not new. Russian power has cast its Byzantine shadow over European political growth ever since the rise of the Russian state and the fall of the Polish kingdom in the 18th century. In the wake of the Napoleonic wars, it was the massive presence of Russian conscripts in the heart of Europe that moved the Congress of Vienna, not only to annul French revolutionary despotism, but to set back Europe's liberal aspirations by some three generations. In 1848, it was the Russian invasion of the Austrian empire that crushed the Magyar uprising and restored the Hapsburg monarchy as bulwark against democratization for another 70 years. More recently, it was again Russia's armed might, in aggression and open warfare, that crushed the democratic reforms in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. The Europeans, as Portugal and Greece have shown, can deal with their native dictators, but they are no match against the overwhelming Russian might. Europe, including European Communist parties, can evolve to democracy only if it can preserve its autonomy against the Russian—Soviet—imperial pressure.

Admittedly, the only lasting hope of freeing Europe from Russian pressure, as *mon général* de Gaulle saw, is the Europeanization of Russia. But no Russian government, least of all the present Soviet one, can afford a democratization of Russia as long as it must sustain imperial domination over a host of recalcitrant, non-Russian peoples. Russia's empire is the greatest obstacle to Russian progress: any reform in Russia would spell revolt in Russia's imperial domains, as was demonstrated by the Polish, Magyar, or Czech responses to Khrushchev's attempt at de-Stalinization. Unfortunately, present policy in the West and in the Soviet Union offers Moscow neither the incentive nor the opportunity to divest itself of its embarrassing European empire without a major trauma. The one opportunity, represented by Czechoslovakia's Dubcek with his policy of "democracy, socialism, and friendship" (with the Soviet Union, that is), died when Soviet armored tanks rolled across the Czechoslovak border on August 21, 1968.

Under these conditions the effective test of the European Communist parties' new-found democracy is not their commitment to civic welfare but their commitment to the political and cultural autonomy of Europe. Quite specifically, this means first of all a commitment to the economic and political integration of Europe's unoccupied littoral, a consistent and emphatic rejection of Soviet interference in West European affairs, a refusal of Russia's imperial expansion into Europe and wholehearted support for all that increases Europe's ability to preserve the autonomy of its democratic institutions.

Intentions apart, power corrupts—but European political parties, including the Communists, would be rather less exposed to its corrupting effect within a federal European framework. Europe is building up safeguards. Within two years, Italians will be electing members to a European parliament and carrying the new purplish passports bearing the legend EUROPA. The sincerity of the Communists' turn to democracy will be gauged quite accurately by their willingness to support European integration. It can also be judged no less accurately by their willingness to support Europe's deterrent capability. It is hard to credit the sincerity of anyone who professes a faith in democracy but denies it the ability to defend itself. In America, this may seem less obvious. The protective oceans create a conviction that American democracy needs no other protection.

But Europe has no ocean protecting its eastern borders. With the disastrous extension of the Russian empire into its heartland, it does not have even a *cordon sanitaire* to separate it from Russia. Geographically, Western Europe is a slender littoral at the fringe of a Russian landmass. The sole shield of its precarious autonomy is its military capability to

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deter the Russians from resuming their interrupted advance. It may be unfortunate, but it is a fact that today one of the crucial tests of a commitment to democracy is a commitment to its ability to defend itself.

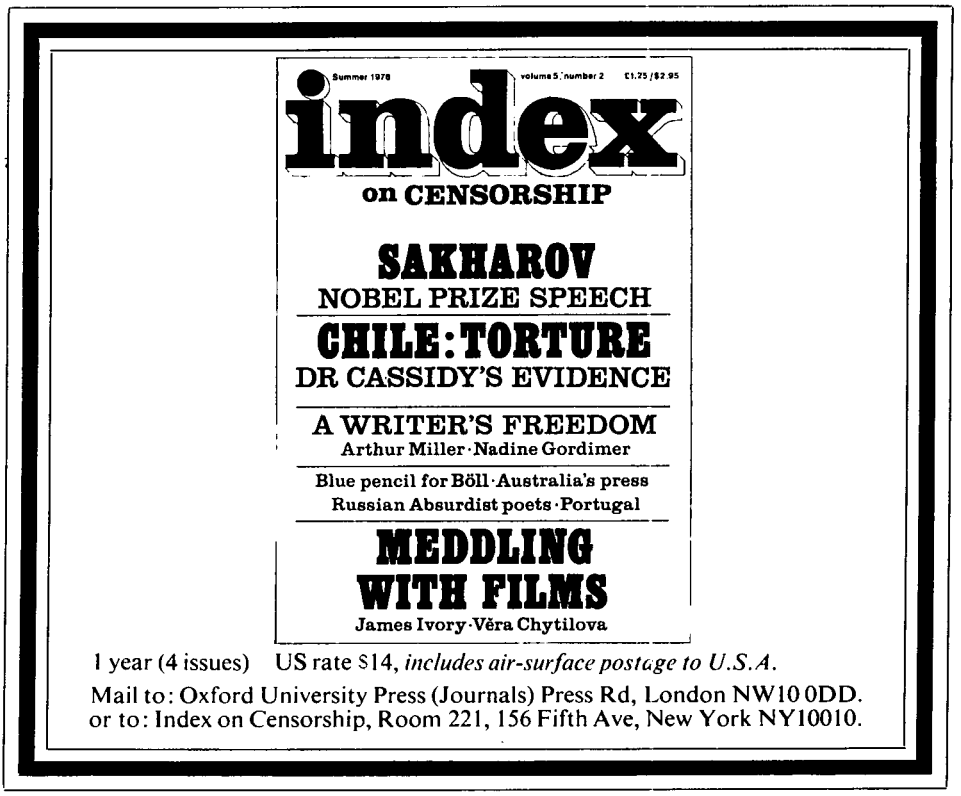
In both these respects, Europe's reformed Communists speak with less clarity than with respect to social welfare. Old habits and postures die hard: after years in militant opposition, the Communists still tend to identify as "progressive" anything that undercuts the society's ability to govern and defend itself effectively. Learning to think of a country as "we" rather than "they," the basic step in democracy, is a long and laborious process.

Yet even that shift may be taking place. In recent years the Italian and the Spanish Communist parties have consistently criticized Soviet imperial ambitions. They have aided Eastern Europe's rebels and have called for a Soviet withdrawal from their European empire—more, ironically, than can be said for Kissinger. They are clearly reconsidering their opposition to European integration and even, hesitantly, their opposition to NATO. The shift, so far, is rather underwhelming, but the trend is there, and welcome.

Altogether, the democratic turn of Europe's major Communist parties, though not without risks, could be a hopeful development. As long as economic, social, and civic backwardness lends legitimacy to the Communist protest, the great hope for disarming the Communist threat to liberty is to incorporate the Communist parties in the democratic process, giving them a vested interest in its preservation. Whether such a strategy can be successful depends, to be sure, less on Communist good will than on the strength of Europe's democratic institutions and military deterrence.

As long as the Soviet Union clings to its European empire, the point at issue simply is not Communism or capitalism, but European freedom and Russian despotism. If Europe's freedom is both internally and externally strong and secure, it is capable of including the Communist parties of Italy, France, and Spain in the democratic process. To the extent that the Communists are willing to participate in strengthening European democracy and European security, they should be more welcomed than feared.

More than. Not, rather than. □



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Henry Pachter

Nostalgia and Revision: The Vogue of Weimar Culture

> They are the opposite of democrats; they want everything to change, even against the wishes of the majority. They want the Absolute ... and are saturated with hate. The older generation, with its bad conscience, never punished them. All protests, threats and actions of the young are directed against the over-30 and their ways of life. ... They go to the theater and applaud parricide.
>
> —Walter Laqueur, in his informative and well-balanced *Weimar: A Cultural History, 1918-1933* (New York: Putnam, 1974)

The year was 1922 and the speaker was not a New York hardhat but Heinrich Mann (brother of the Thomas who was to become the oracle of Weimar Culture). From this source, the complaint sounds surprising; for Heinrich Mann had been a satirist, the sharpest critic of Teutonic authoritarianism, and a butt of patriotic recrimination. His Olympian brother had called him a *Zivilisationsliterat* (phony intellectual). His film *The Blue Angel* was to launch Marlene Dietrich on her career as the sex symbol of her age, and as Siegfried Kracauer has pointed out, the film owed its success not so much to Marlene's incomparable legs (which were matched by the Tiller Girls and Ziegfeld's "revues," that new art form of the '20s) as to her raucous voice, her lack of talent, and the vulgar cruelty of the character she was portraying. More than one historian has called the 1920s "the age of Marlene," but, more appropriately, it should be called the age of ambiguity.

In his book on Weimar, Walter Laqueur leaves no doubt that the low-brow culture of the 1920s—six-day bicycle races, jazz and youth cult, faddism and cocaine, paramilitary parades and beerhall brawls, schmaltzy hit songs, Sad Sack and Student Prince movies—was more characteristic of the Weimar Republic than all its Einsteins and Plancks, Manns and Brechts. However, the peasant who brought his eggs to Florence did not look at Michelangelo's David either but went to pray before a crudely painted Saint, and if Cesare Borgia could live in the same City with Raphael, why not Paul von Hindenburg, the Kaiser's field marshal and later president of the Republic, with Josephine Baker, the nude dancer who was both black and Jewish? But Laqueur does not let us off so easily with a neat partition into "two cultures," be they low-brow and high-brow, conservative and decadent, or right and left. He shows that the good and the bad, the grave and the sophisticated, the noble and the ridiculous were intimately connected.

A few examples must suffice. The famous radical authors of the left-wing weekly, the *Weltbuehne* (comparable to the *Nation*), are quoted as being admirers of Mussolini and of the *Camelots du Roi*. Walter Benjamin, now a New Left saint, was able to travel through Italy without noticing that the country was ruled by fascist goons and the laborers were poor. On the other hand, the exciting films that gave the Weimar scene an avant-garde air were distributed by UFA, the reactionary concern belonging to the monarchist Nazi sponsor

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Alfred Hugenberg, and some of their great directors later tried to collaborate with Dr. Goebbels's Ministry of Culture. Emil Nolde, the expressionist painter, and Gottfried Benn, the expressionist poet, and, of course, Martin Heidegger, the existentialist philosopher, hailed Hitler as the God-sent instrument that was to realize their ideas—though to their chagrin their idol rebuffed them as "culture bolshevists."

This mistaking of "modern" for "left" was almost universal. Fritz Lang, the director of *M*, and *Dr. Mabuse*, and of the populist, anticapitalist *Metropolis*, was about to become a maker of cultural policy in the Third Reich—when it was discovered that he had a Jewish grandmother. But Furtwaengler, the great conductor, became one of Hitler's state councillors and did not emulate Toscanini and choose exile. Vice versa, those Nazi students who marched with the SS in military formation were the same nihilistic, antiauthoritarian youths about whom the radical novelist complained: they were subversive and, following Hitler, even antipatriotic; as surely as they hoped to become *Beamte* (civil servants) one day, their mentality was far from the cliché of the obedient, subservient German *Untertan* (subject) depicted by Heinrich Mann and George Gross.

Laqueur's analysis yields striking insights that contradict Herbert Marcuse's simplistic scheme in which high-brow culture appears as merely a sublimated reflection of the capitalist reality, and low-brow culture as a mere escape from it. For Laqueur both high-brow and low-brow culture contain elements of reflection and elements of protest, elements of deflection and elements of the creative, as well as destructive adaptations to reality. Paradoxes abound. A truly "modern" author, Ernst Juenger, consciously prepared the totalitarian ideology and cultivated the militaristic spirit, whereas Erich-Maria Remarque, who still passes for a man of the left, was honestly surprised when the Nazis found *All Quiet on the Western Front* offensive.

Nor did the left have a monopoly on creativity and quality. I have named here some of the most significant minds of the Weimar scene who were Nazis; their contemporaries counted these and other patriotic writers among their intellectual elite just as they considered critics of the Republic from the left, such as Brecht, as part of the ensemble that we now call "Weimar culture," which seemed to embrace the sublime and the ludicrous, the honest and the mean, from Marlene to Heidegger, from Schoenberg to Spengler. It is entirely mistaken to believe that Weimar culture consisted of the *Weltbuehne*, the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research and a few Jewish intellectuals, surrounded by a mass of Yahoos. This impression has been created by the self-serving memoirs of some refugee intellectuals who, on arriving in Hollywood, declared that German culture had emigrated. Not so. The poet laureate of the Republic, Gerhart Hauptmann, who cultivated a superficial resemblance to Goethe, ended by composing a Prologue for one of Hitler's festivals. It is true that no significant works appeared under the Thousand Year Reich, whereas Thomas and Heinrich Mann, Brecht, Feuchtwanger, and many others continued to be productive.

It is somewhat paradoxical that the so-called Weimar Intellectuals should have claimed the Republic's heritage. For as long as that Republic existed, they had protested their alienation from it through all the media. According to them, the Republic was nothing but imperial Germany minus the Kaiser; its institutions were neither inspiring nor dynamic; its leaders were party and trade union bosses. Tucholsky, the darling of the Weimar left, found the Republic much too philistine and plebeian.

This sense of alienation became a trait so essential that Adorno later made negativity a duty of the clerk. Laqueur shows that much of the ebullient creativity and intellectual effervescence now known as "Weimar Culture" developed in opposition to, or maybe outside, the social and political foundations on which it

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rested. The intelligentsia often seemed to live in a different world.

When intellectuals projected their alienation on the political screen, they might develop either what Laqueur calls "the Tucholsky syndrome" (blaming the Republic for not being *Jacobin*) or the Stefan George syndrome (looking down on its lack of nobility and structure). A third way was that of Thomas Mann, pleading with the Republic to develop "a politics of Novalis." But that grandiose failure, *The Magic Mountain*—revealing so much less about the Weimar Republic than, for instance, Roger Martin du Gard reveals about the Troisième Republique or H. G. Wells about post-Victorian England—mirrors quite faithfully the incomprehension and impotence of the German intellectuals confronted with a new social reality, just as the vogue of Heidegger's philosophy exhibited almost brutally their inability to make contact with their society.

Contemplating the lack of a unifying philosophy, Laqueur makes the shrewd remark that instead of one Weimar Culture, there were many—with each cult, party, circle or coterie having its own press, priests, coffee houses and even resort places—and that they could all have coexisted for a long time but for the Great Depression, which forced the power brokers to act out their ideologies, for it politicized and radicalized the various group identifications. Mr. Laqueur does not pursue these relationships between ideology and reality, for in fact he does not devote a full chapter to the social conditions at all, and he does not show how the coexistence of ideologies interacted with the coexistence of interest groups. It should be clear, however, that, to the chagrin of both Tucholsky and Heidegger, Weimar was a pluralistic state whose policies were determined by logrolling and compromise. In fact, even before the Republic had adopted a constitution, its "social partners," the industrialist Hugo Stinnes and the trade union leader Carl Legien, had concluded an "Agreement to Cooperate" (Arbeitsgemeinschaft). The Republic of the Squares—despised by both the Jacobins of the left and of the right—committed itself to avoid civil war, and so it disappointed the expectation of both the Communists and the militarists who envisaged a war of revenge against the Versailles powers, side-by-side with the Soviet Army. Rejecting glory and idealism, the Republic opted for peace and bread. Intellectuals, becoming more and more journalistic and sensationalist, wanted to see drama, excitement.

Laqueur is entirely on the side of the squares, not for any deep philosophical reasons, but, as befits such a position, entirely on pragmatic grounds. Rejecting the political fantasies of the ideologists, he simply tells the story of blundering politicians who were too harassed to understand the lost possibilities later historians now hold against them. This sober view, this absence of illusions and regrets, should be held against the more ideological and nostalgic books on the Weimar period, and I don't hesitate to proclaim, without intended malice, that Walter Laqueur's greatest merit is what previous reviewers have blamed him for: his book seems deliberately uninspiring, to the point of boredom; it enumerates and records, but does not advocate. (His judgment is so balanced that he even concedes that the social democrats might be charged with lack of resolution.) Refreshingly, he also refuses to mention the sociological and metaphysical reasons why the Weimar experiment *had* to fail; we have had enough of these. On his pragmatic level, he can state that the Republic fell because it was pursued by bad luck and because some people made the wrong decisions. Bucking the trend of interpretation, he restores history to its rightful place. His lesson seems simple: other Western democracies do not have to succumb to the onslaught of totalitarianism and defeatism. Most emphatically, he denies any parallel between the Weimar of the 1920s and today's America.

Yet, after all this has been said, the curious still might ask why the Republic had so little appeal for the intellectuals, why it was so repugnant to the middle-class youth? Were there no ideological forces that might have averted

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the decomposition of the body politic? Or, with respect to the Tucholsky syndrome, why did people whose very existence depended on the Republic nevertheless exert themselves to hasten its fall? It has been said that the Weimar Republic was a republic without republicans. For most of its 14 years, this was not quite correct, and even if all the parties using anti-establishment rhetoric—Separatists, Communists, Nazis, and Nationalists—together might have received a majority of the vote, they could never have formed a coalition. But in another sense the contention has meaning. Like the French Republic after 1871, the German Republic after 1918, born of defeat and accepted as an interim solution, was not loved by anyone. To the rightists it was the "Jew Republic," to the leftists it was the bourgeois, merely formal republic, to the Bavarians it was the "Prussian" republic; to the intellectuals it was the middle-class republic; to the young it was the republic of their parents. The choice of Weimar—a small provincial town where Goethe had once founded an intellectual center and the national theater—as host for the Constituent Assembly, meant to indicate that the German revolution was to be the most polite and genteel affair in history. The sansculottes in revolutionary Berlin would not invade sessions, as their Paris forebears had done in 1792; there was not even the faint smell of sansculottism then still lingering in that republican sanctum, St. Paul's church at Frankfurt, where Germany's first Parliament had met in 1848. There was only to be *Kultur*; the name of Goethe was to reassure everybody, especially the middle class and the Western powers, that this was a revolution without Jacobins.

To the younger generation, however, Goethe was the hated subject of high school essays, while everything that was new, dynamic, fresh, or simply intelligent in German letters was either romantic or expressionistic or sick. Goethe had nothing to say to the 1920s, and after Nietzsche, *Kultur* was precisely what the Youth Movement was trying to get rid of—we called bathing suits "culture rags." The appeal of Goethe's Weimar found no response among the creators of the big fair that today is called "Weimar Culture." The generation of Young Werther could not be assorted more thoughtlessly than with the generation that made Berlin the vice capital of Europe. This was one subject on which the Jacobins of the left and of the right could agree.

The revolution produced neither a Robespierre nor a Cromwell, but it killed Rosa Luxemburg, and instead of to Napoleon it succumbed to a Hitler. Spengler had called for a Caesar, Max Weber for a "charismatic leader," Count Kessler would have accepted "anyone" provided he would fire the youth with enthusiasm. It was definitely no dumb mass that was craving to be subjected, but the intellectuals. The Republic may not have been without republicans but it certainly was lacking intellectual leaders who cared for it. Its ruling elites, the professors, the lawyers, the doctors, the higher civil servants, the churches cultivated the memory of the imperial structure and mostly leaned to the right. The press and the movies may have employed liberals but were dominated by reactionary owners (except in Berlin and Frankfurt, where a few good papers were owned by liberal Jews). Even in deeply republican Prussia, the state government did not dare to purge the civil service of monarchists. And on Constitution Day, the high school principals would rather show no flag than the republican colors.

All of this, and worse, did not kill France's *Troisième* République, which simply had better luck but also had more republican traditions to build on. Its intellectuals were as much "outsiders" as those of Weimar, and I see no need to emphasize the fact that in Germany so many of them were Jews. Both Laqueur and Gay make much of the theory that assimilation was rather superficial and therefore, true Germans (or true Frenchmen, for that matter, like Barrés) felt unable to accept the preponderance of Jews among the literati.*

I wonder why one hears so often Jews accepting this Nazi argument: Jews were urban,

*Peter Gay, in "The Jewish Intellectuals in the Wilhelminian Empire," Menorah, January 1975.

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middle-class, traditionally devoted to learning, hence it is natural to find them represented heavily among the free professions. Moreover, as a minority, they may have tended to be more sensitive, just like Protestants in France or Southerners and Negroes in the U.S.; hence their interest in psychology and literature and art criticism. It is true, as Laqueur writes, that without some of the Jewish names the intellectual life of Weimar Germany was almost unthinkable; among these were owners of significant publishing houses, art galleries, and magazines, they were prominent in the theater and in the movies, in the press, and above all in criticism. Jews were swarming around Richard Wagner (as critics and conductors, despite Hitler's devotion to the composer), Richard Strauss (his librettist was Hugo von Hoffmannsthal, half Jewish), and Stefan George. Contrary to Laqueur's assertion, they were prominent in the arts (Liebermann, the foremost German impressionist), in sociology (Simmel, Oppenheimer, Kelsen, Albert and Gottfried Salomon, Gruenberg, not counting the ex-Hungarians, Lukacs and Mannheim who wrote in German), and even (despite considerable resistance from the faculties) among philosophers (Hermann Cohen, Jonas Cohn, Cassirer, Joel, Dessoir, Husserl, Liebert). But all these men (with the exception of Einstein and Hermann Cohen who were active Zionists, and of Martin Buber, Rosenstock, and Brunner who cultivated Jewish mysticism) were thinkers not *qua* Jews. For all practical purposes they were as German and patriotic as Proust and Bergson were French and French patriots.

Jews in business were even more patriotic: Rathenau had organized the German war economy and had published ideas his Nazi murderers, had they been literate, would have approved of, and Albert Ballin, the shipowner, was to my knowledge the Kaiser's only friend who shot himself when he heard of Wilhelm's ignominious flight. (Some Jews also traveled in Italy and wrote admiringly about Mussolini as long as the latter was not anti-Semitic; e.g., Emil Ludwig, otherwise a pet target of fascist insults.)

The legend that the Jewish spirit is "negativistic" or especially incompatible with German aspirations is just untenable (it may also be "sour grapes" considering the eagerness with which Jewish emigrés assert that they were "Weimar culture"). Sillier still is the charge that the Jewish spirit "undermined" German *Kultur*. The Nazis did not attack the Republic because it was "Jewish" or "Judaized," but they found the Jews a convenient target as symbols of rationalism, liberalism, and republicanism; in Italy, where there were no Jews to speak of, the fascists had to invent a conspiracy of freemasons for similar purposes.

It will therefore not do to attribute the gulf between the intellectuals and the Republic to the Jewishness of either the intellectuals or the Republic. The gap was in the relationship of republican institutions with the intellectual heritage of Germany, in the bewilderment of modernization, in the narrow-minded, even hateful contempt of the elites for the society that fed them.

Weimar culture did not grow out of the social and political structure of the Republic but largely in protest against it; that age, which in another context I have called Periclean, was one of anguish and strife. It was an age that may best be characterized by one of its favorite words: interesting, but considerably short of great; certainly not seminal since most of the ideas with which it throbbed—Bauhaus, relativity, psychoanalysis, expressionism, the liberation of youth and women—had originated in the previous epoch; however, it certainly made the diffusion of these ideas a thrilling experience. Strangely, the original contributions that the 1920s made to sociology and political theory are not given credit, and in general the relationship between the social-economic background and the prevailing ideologies remains unexplored. A pity, because even if the state was republican only in form, or perhaps because of that condition, its culture was a true republic of letters. □

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Philip Green

The Pseudoscience of Arthur Jensen

This article is the second of three dealing with the subject of Genetics, IQ, and Equality. The first, entitled "Race and IQ: Fallacy of Heritability," appeared in our spring issue; the last of the series, entitled "IQ and the Future of Equality," will appear in the fall.—Eds.

In my previous article on this subject I have discussed the differential social conditions that can, without difficulty, be seen as accounting for most or all of the average black/white IQ gap that Arthur Jensen has tried to explain with a "genetic hypothesis." Nothing in that discussion was novel, nor even very arguable, as Jensen must be aware; he himself, as we saw, conducted a testing exercise during which he revealed more than half of that gap to be illusory even though he controlled only some of the severe caste disabilities from which American black people have suffered. How then can Jensen assert with certitude that environmental differences do *not* account for that gap, but that the explanation of it is rather to be found in the "science" of human genetics; and how has he persuaded so many otherwise thoughtful people that he has made a serious critique of egalitarianism?[1] (For Notes, see p. 296)

Jensen cannot simply believe that intelligence is measured directly by IQ tests, that IQ values within and between populations are heritable, and that heritability equals irremediability. All of these dubious propositions (as we have shown them to be) could be true, and yet the particular racial IQ gap in the U.S. could still be caused by the obvious differences in the average social environments of American blacks and American whites.[2]

The root of Jensen's racial inegalitarianism must therefore be sought elsewhere. It is found, to be precise, in his alleged empirical demonstration that, all such theoretical questions aside, the environmental differences between blacks and whites do *not* account for the average IQ difference.

Jensen's attempt at empirical demonstration consists of two parts. On the one hand, he tries to show that particular negative environmental conditions (such as those discussed by me in the Spring *Dissent*) do not affect IQ performance. On the other hand, he tries to prove that blacks (or certain nonwhite races generally) in the "same" social position as whites still do not, on the average, perform as well as whites on IQ tests. The two strands of reasoning together lead him to conclude that whether or not IQ represents a malleable trait, *interracial* IQ differences at least are not socially malleable.

This alleged empirical demonstration must finally bear the entire weight of Jensen's case. If there is no significant difference between the average IQs of those members of the two races who live in roughly similar social environments, and if those environmental conditions bearing on them unequally when they live in dissimilar environments can be direct-

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ly linked to IQ gain or deficit—then there would be nothing further to explain. The whole theoretical apparatus of genetics studies—comparisons among separated twins, etc.—would then be irrelevant to the subject of race, whatever its scientific merit or (as I have argued) demerit.[3] Jensen must establish the two empirical arguments I have attributed to him; he must refute the two counter-propositions I have suggested immediately above in this paragraph. If he cannot do that, then the work that geneticists have done may still be thought to be suggestive about the importance of genes in determining some amount of the apparent differences in intelligence that exist among *individuals.* But the attempt to demonstrate the same phenomenon for racial or ethnic *groups* would deserve no further attention and would eventually be remembered only as a scandalous contribution to the lore of pseudoscience.

Yet it is doubtful if a supposedly serious intellectual argument has ever before been based on a more uncomprehending use of genuine data, and a more wholehearted reliance on utterly spurious "data." If we look at Jensen's most central empirical "demonstrations," we see that his view of what constitutes "evidence" is idiosyncratic, his presentation meretricious, and thus his claim to have demonstrated the genetic ineradicability of the IQ gap utterly false. The notion that biology accounts for the greater part of the average IQ difference between American blacks and American whites turns out indeed to be a footnote in the history of pseudoscience.

II

We shall look at Jensen's two propositions in turn: first, that environmental conditions usually thought to be detrimental to the normal development of the human organism, do not have a major effect on IQ (or "intelligence"); second, that the IQ gap persists even as the environmental conditions of black people improve toward the average situation of American whites.

With respect to the first kind of argument, Jensen purports to review the literature that suggests dysfunctional prenatal, natal, and postnatal environments should have a debilitating effect on intellectual performance and may thus account for much of the IQ deficit of blacks, who, on the average, suffer from these kinds of dysfunction so much more than whites. In several chapters of *Educability and Group Differences,* Jensen attempts to attack the notion that unequally distributed conditions of reproductive casualty, malnutrition, or poor nutrition, lead poisoning, chronic disease, etc. are implicated in the racial IQ difference. In some cases his arguments are self-contradictory, as when he tries to bolster his genetic "hypothesis" by offering evidence that "prolongation of infancy," from which black children allegedly suffer, leads to later intellectual stasis (chap. 16 of *Educability*): how the prolongation of infancy can be anything but cultural Jensen cannot explain, and his tortured discussion of this point gives the impression of nothing so much as a man wrestling himself to a fall. In other cases he flagrantly misuses simple statistical notions to avoid the clearly environmentalist implications of his own evidence.[4] But on the whole his efforts in this vein are of little interest, even if the best face is put on them.

Jensen's invariant procedure is to argue that the environmental condition he discusses can only have a significant effect on the average IQ of a deprived group if it occurs with a much greater frequency and intensity than it does in the U.S. His estimates of the frequency of occurrence of these phenomena are often idiosyncratic, but that hardly matters, given the naivete of his reasoning.[5] None of these conditions may have a significant effect on the average IQ by itself; if all the deprivations that blacks suffer from more than whites had such an effect, the IQ deficit would be 30 or 40 rather than 15 points. It is enough that each of the postulated conditions—I mean the conditions educators and psychologists have *observed,* at one time or another, to have a depressing effect on intellectual performance—more often makes

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some small, additional negative contribution to the lives of blacks than to the lives of whites.

Moreover, most often two or more conditions will be operating together (e.g., slum living and lead poisoning; poor nutrition and chronic disease; lack of sleep and parasitism and the results of delivery complications; etc.). It is not possible to "test" the results of each of these relative deprivations in the sense that Jensen would like us to test them—isolating an experimental group and a control group for each variable, and discovering the discrete effects; only an absolutely totalitarian state, devoted to nothing but testing theories of social causation, could arrange the conditions for a "proper" test. But, on the other hand, it is absolutely unnecessary to pursue so relentlessly the chimera of a "pure" social science, for in fact the environmentalist proposition has already been successfully tested.

The cumulative impact of their various relative deprivations, for black people as a whole, is the total impact of being black in America, and thus disproportionately (on the average) poor, excluded, or even oppressed. Jensen mocks those who, having been unable to establish a strong correlation between any particular aspect of the poverty syndrome and low IQ, insist that the syndrome itself is the chief contributor to the poor performance; that environmental damage, depressed economic and social status, and a psychic orientation limited by low or simply non-professional aspirations, all fit together to make up a relatively low-performance intellectual life-style. But of course the effects of that syndrome have been measured: by IQ tests! Not being standardized for differential racial or ethnic group performance (as they are, for example, standardized to make sure that the performance of the sexes is generally equal), IQ tests well reflect in what ways our kind of social environment has a differential impact on people who are able to participate more, or less, in its most characteristic institutions.

Jensen himself is well aware of this. At one point of an analysis depending on his use of variance models involving the mythical h=.80, he says with clear condescension that "an environmental theory of the racial group difference must therefore posit some hypothetical factor or factors (e.g., racial discrimination) having no within-group variance to account for the between-groups difference." (*Educability;* pp. 186-87). Surely that is exactly what environmentalists "posit," but Jensen never returns to this point again. He never says anything further to belie the obvious conclusion that environmentalists "posit" that "hypothetical" factor of "racial discrimination" as the summation of all the disabilities to which American blacks are subjected, because it is so obviously the determinative factor in the IQ difference. (Whether the motive for discriminations to which black people are especially subject is racial or, as Banfield insists, social—because of their "lower-class" life-style—is not relevant here; either way, the posited psychic effect will be the same.)

If we started with a hypothesis of rough equality among the genetic potentials of different racial and ethnic groups, we would have no difficulty at all in explaining the shortfall of black IQ, nor would we feel a theoretical need to decompose the discrimination/poverty syndrome into its (non-decomposable) component parts. The average IQ racial differential is one standard deviation—one-sixth of the total range within which 99 percent of measurements fall in a normal, bell-shaped distribution; 15 IQ points in this case. That variation surely seems to be of about the same order of magnitude as the average differential in life chances between blacks and whites: to repeat, this seems to need no further explanation.

Thus all Jensen's half-hearted and sometimes self-contradictory ransacking of researches into the effects of environmental deprivation is trivial. It is interesting to note too that his reports of these researches are often obscurantist, even if we follow him in giving more credence to such studies than they probably deserve. Thus, from the use he

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makes of a summarizing article about the interrelation between nutrition and intellectual performance, one would never know that its authors conclude,

> . . . children from underprivileged families in the United States exhibit growth characteristics resembling those of children in less developed countries, where inadequate nutrition has been shown to retard physical growth. . . . In short, the information available at present about the distribution of malnutrition and retardation in the United States suggests that it resembles the distribution in other areas of the world [being found] among groups who are vulnerable not only because of food deprivation itself but as part of the whole culture of poverty.

The article also finds strong suggestions of a linkage between poor nutrition, infectious disease, and low-level retardation—by which is meant simply low IQ.[6]

That finding is no doubt as questionable as Jensen's contrary conclusion. But no matter; for as we have now seen, in the end the veridity of Jensen's argument about racial equality rests entirely on the second series of comparisons, those purporting to show that even when class and caste are "held constant," average black intellectual ability does not measure up to that of whites. Without these comparisons, we might reasonably conclude that it is difficult to trace in a methodologically satisfactory way the exact causal sequence in differential IQ performance (the precise separation of cause and effect being so elusive in social research). But we would certainly find no reason to doubt the impressionistic observations of those who work in the field: that various kinds of environmental deprivation have a noticeable effect on mental alertness and performance, nor would we have any reason to doubt that a sleepy, hungry, uninterested child will perform worse on an IQ test than a well-fed, alert, and eager one. Nor would we be impressed by Jensen's erroneous arguments that there is a high value for the heritability of intelligence as between the races, and that heritability suggests nonmalleability, even if we did not know that these arguments were erroneous. Only because we have been told (by Jensen) that the hypothesis of "rough equality" is incompatible with the data about IQ and race—that the IQ gap manifests itself even under conditions wherein all those variables are "controlled" (in "matching" differential racial groups for comparative observation)—do we begin to doubt whether IQ has been socially rather than genetically molded in the past, and whether we may socially mold "intelligence" in a more egalitarian way in the future.

But Jensen is wrong. All of his assertions about such comparisons are false. And they are false even given his own pollyannaish view of our ability to do truly controlled social research.The data show equality more than they show inequality.

III

There are, essentially, only a handful of major comparative data collections on which Jensen has rested his entire case that caste and class do not affect black IQ performance. The most important of them must be analyzed in detail, if we are to understand how empty an intellectual construction "Jensenism" is, once stripped of its undeserved scientific pretensions.

But before we consider those studies, it is necessary to look at a related discussion Jensen uses to justify his major overall claim that race differences in "intelligence" (as measured by IQ tests) are generally determined genetically: for we could not take Jensen's argument at all seriously if the claim was that only between American blacks and American whites did this particular relationship hold. Thus, in order to combat the obvious conclusion that IQ tests are so culturally biased as to be worthless for interracial comparisons (see my argument in the Spring 1976 *Dissent*), Jensen quotes a study, from Australia, comparing "Piagetian test performances of full-blooded Aborigines with those who were part Aboriginal and part Caucasian," of whom the original author says that "the children were brought up under the same mission conditions and attended the same school."[7] Jensen then reproduces a table (17.1 on p. 316 of *Educability*) titled "Comparison of the number of part-Aboriginal and

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full-Aboriginal children showing conservation" (a conception from the Piagetian theory of learning that combines elements of what we ordinarily call memory and abstract reasoning power). According to this table the part-Aboriginal children show a distinct advantage on all six of the administered tests, and Jensen concludes:

> The results appear almost as if the admixture of Caucasian genes, even so few as one-eighth, introduces mental structures otherwise lacking, that permit the individual to reach higher levels of mental development than normally occurs in the majority of full-Aboriginals.

Jensen's claim, as stated, is deliberately shocking and provocative. It is fundamental to his hypothesis of racial differences. It is also totally false.

What Jensen has done, simply, is to suppress the most important part of the original evidence, by leaving out the words "(Herrmansburg Group)," after "children" in Table 17.1—words that appear in the original of the table. There were, in reality, *two* mission schools, at Herrmansburg and a village called Elcho, and the Elcho group were all (allegedly) full-blooded Aboriginals. A trial-and-error analysis of the original data from both missions shows that no matter how we reanalyze the data to make all measurements as comparable as possible, the part-Aboriginals at Herrmansburg did indeed do better than the full-Aboriginals there, *but among the older age groups the full-blooded Aboriginals at Elcho did better than or equal to the part-Aboriginals on at least four of the six tests.* (The original article provides no such analysis, and our own must be trial-and-error because it does not provide the same kinds of data about age or test-score distribution for the two missions.)

That the full-Aboriginals at Herrmansburg did not do as well as either of the other groups is a matter of mild intellectual interest, and there are several obvious explanations—but it has no relevance for "genetic" interpretations of the test-score difference. "Caucasian genes" either add something that non-Caucasian genes lack, or they don't: the performance of the Elcho children is sufficient evidence that they don't. In fact, if we take this (somewhat absurd) study seriously as evidence for a genetic interpretation of IQ differences, it actually shows that full-blooded Aboriginals at the ages Piaget considers close to intellectual maturity, and living in their own community, are slightly superior!

Of course this is not the point to be drawn either from the original study or from Jensen's dishonest use of it. The real point is, generally, that we should be wary of "statistical studies" purporting to contradict decades of informed observation, and, specifically, that Jensen is unable to find any cross-cultural evidence for his genetic hypothesis without engaging in the distortion of data. We are thereby alerted to look more closely at what he offers as evidence within the American setting—and this close attention is amply repaid.

As I have said, Jensen's bedrock argument is based on what happens when social class and caste are allegedly held constant in comparing IQ measurements. The study of Aboriginals did not genuinely hold either race or age constant (as it had to, to make his point); when it comes to class (or SES—socio-economic status, as it will hereafter be called) Jensen fares no better.

The main body of Jensen's interracial "comparisons" are summed up in chap. 11 of *Educability* and on pp. 81-84 of his original *Harvard Educational Review* article.[8] In these passages, however, Jensen has almost nothing to say about his own conception of how to compare SES; we must look first at two peripheral components of his overall argument to see how and why he goes so badly wrong in making these comparisons.

In the first of these (p. 83, *HER*) Jensen attempts to explain genetically the much greater incidence of subnormal IQs (below 75) among blacks than among whites. The "science" and "scholarship" contained in that passage are so wretchedly shoddy as to be beneath lengthy consideration (that may be why Jensen has dropped all references to this comparison in his later work).[9] But it is of interest that within the table Jensen presents,

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which compares blacks and whites in 5 SES quintiles (top 20 percent in socioeconomic status, next 20 percent, etc.) for below-75 IQ rates, there are various statistical relationships that are only explicable on an *environmental* hypothesis. For example, between the highest and lowest SES quintiles the retardation ratio is similar for each race, whereas in every such comparison not involving the highest quintile, the black interclass ratio is very foreshortened compared to the white: a datum suggesting to any sensitive observer that at the time the data were gathered only a very small proportion of blacks compared to white (only those in the upper SES quintile) had escaped the stultifying aspects of lower-class, or lower-caste, life. That same observer would also have noticed that the black/white retardation ratio falls sharply in the lowest quintile, which suggests that the rate of subnormality in blacks has already reached diminishing returns before one gets to the lowest quintile, in which contrarily retardation among whites is just beginning to "take off"; in other words, the black lower class begins higher up on the SES scale than the white lower class.

Similarly, a genetic hypothesis can make no sense of the correlative fact that according to the table the subnormality ratio differs in the various quintiles, for if subnormal intelligence were carried racially, the ratio would always be the same for any two similar breakdowns of the two populations. The obvious suggestion is that dividing the two racial populations up into the same SES quintiles does *not* truly equate them with each other socially—but Jensen fails to notice that suggestion.

Similarly, in *Educability* (pp. 343ff) Jensen argues that the lower average SES of black people cannot account for the overall strikingly higher incidence of prematurity and pregnancy complications among them. Referring to a widely cited study from Baltimore in the early 1950s, he doubts that "the average Negro SES is below the lower tenth or lower fifth of the white population in Baltimore," as the comparative rates of reproductive casualty would suggest. He goes on to give an *outré* genetic explanation of reproductive casualty itself.[10] The "average SES" was not in question in the Baltimore study, but rather average health care and general maternal and infant welfare in a border city, in a period well before the rise to middle-class status of a significant proportion of American blacks had got under way. Moreover, SES in that study was defined by average census tract characteristics, and it is quite possible, if not likely, that the average black census tract in that segregated city at that time was in about the state of the worst white census tract.

In each case, Jensen's analysis shows that he lacks sociological sensitivity, for he treats SES categories as though they were handed down on tablets from above. It never occurs to him that saying, e.g., blacks are in the "second 20 percent," does not make it so.

"SES" refers, ordinarily, to an index composed of points equally gained for income, occupation, and years of education. But the latter two categories especially (even the first to an extent) are meaninglessly abstract unless we know they are measuring the same thing all the time. For black people (or members of other low caste groups), those indices do not measure the same things as they measure for whites. That is, at a given occupational "rank" blacks are almost certainly lower down within the particular occupation, and therefore earning a good deal less income. At a given educational level (years of schooling), blacks were by the late 1950s almost equal to whites with respect to formal attainment but were still likely to have received an inferior education, which would pay off much less well than the education of whites.[11] Education and occupation at any SES level both pay off in much better income (the reality of the well-off life, to which the other two criteria are only tentative guides) for whites than for blacks. Thus even at "SES level 2"—even at a fairly high level of income itself—blacks are likely to suffer disproportionately the effects of a stigmatized, ghettoized life—effects such as inferior health care and other services, and, perhaps, an extreme distrust and resentment of "white insti-

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tutions" such as schools and IQ tests. Those feelings, of course, can bear fruit in poor test performance.

Nor is it merely a deduction that "objectively" measured SES does not pay off for blacks as it does for whites; there are data to bear out the supposition. The three components of SES are each rated on a separate scale from 1 to 100 (the result is an overall rating that could be as high as 300 or as low as 3).

Ordinarily we would expect these components of social rank to vary roughly together. But where there are differences, the striking fact is that

> the SES scale does not even behave similarly for the two races in its gross properties—always a strong signal that we are not measuring the same thing in each population. . . . (P)ersons were registered as being "consistent" in SES if they had scores on each of the three underlying 100 points scales which all fell within 20 points of each other. The median overall SES for all whites was 55.2, while the median SES for consistent whites was 11.8 points *higher*. . . . For blacks, the median SES was 28.5, but the consistent blacks had scores 15.9 points *lower*. . . .[12]

The most obvious explanation for this discrepancy, as noted above, is that the value of education and occupation "points" were deflated for black people by the discriminatory treatment they were receiving in both schools and job markets, as compared with whites.

All of this is merely a complicated way of saying that no matter how many quintiles or deciles the population is sliced into, within or between races, there is proportionately a much larger black than white "lower class"; or, rather the black lower class effectively begins at a much higher point on the SES scale than does the white. Thus an environmental (sociological) hypothesis has no trouble accounting for such figures as those on subnormal intelligence, whereas the "genetic hypothesis" can only explain them by falsifying data and torturing itself into self-contradiction.

This ambiguity in the meaning of socio-economic status or class, whenever we speak of race in America, is what must be kept in mind once we come to Jensen's ultimate justification—the very cornerstone of his assumption that racial IQ differences are in need of additional explanation that only genetics can provide.

IV

Jensen's justification is found in his statement, upon which in the end all of "Jensenism" stands or falls, that no one "has yet produced any evidence based on a properly controlled study to show that representative samples of Negro and white children can be equalized in intellectual ability through statistical control of environment and education." No one, it should be clear by now, can really hope to produce such a study, since the only appropriate "control" would be a comparison between blacks and whites living in a color-blind, racially egalitarian society—and "studies" will not produce that. But Jensen goes on to "note the results of studies which have attempted to control for SES by actual matching or by statistical equating of groups." And he puts all the weight of his argument on the finding of Audrey Shuey that where such studies provide the data necessary for more detailed interracial comparisons, "upper-status" blacks are invariably found to do worse than "lower-status" whites. Attacking the thesis that caste-linked cultural and physical deprivation might have a significant effect on intellectual performance, Jensen approvingly quotes Shuey: "It seems improbable that upper- and middle-class colored children would have no more culture [*sic*] opportunities provided them than white children of the lower and lowest class." (*HER*, p. 84; Shuey, p. 520).[13]

It would be easy to dismiss these studies as pointless, on the grounds of Jensen's incomprehension of the operational meaning of class and caste in America. But the studies remain, and it is instructive to look at them. For though those studies, as it turns out, tell us nothing about innate racial IQ differences, they tell us much about the meaning of discrimination in the U.S. (or anywhere), and

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even more about Jensen and his source, Audrey Shuey.

The matching studies to which Jensen refers have been collected by Shuey (pp. 516-20, and *passim*). I have reanalyzed 35 of her total of 42 cases, ignoring those reported between 1913 and 1929 as being without real credibility *eo ipso*. The results are fascinating. Six of the 35 are discussed separately later on: the remaining 29 are correctly classified as follows:

- Five reveal insignificant differences (two-four points) between black and white average IQs.
- Four reveal moderate differences (around one-half of a standard deviation, which is 15 IQ points). Of the 24 studies that seem to reveal significant differences, these four were without exception among the most carefully controlled. One of them, from a Pittsburgh high school in 1957, shows middle-class black students at about the national white IQ mean. And a fifth study, which can also be put in the "carefully controlled" category, shows sharp IQ differences in a lower-class neighborhood, but only moderate differences in a middle-class neighborhood.
- The other 19 studies do indeed show large differentials of about the national average of one standard deviation (SD). But hardly any of them show any appreciation at all of the difficulty involved in comparing black and white SES. Two of them offer no evidence of any control of background variables, Shuey's and Jensen's claim to the contrary. For 15 more, the claim that social status was "matched" is an obvious fraud. For most of the 15 only one or two insufficient indices of well-being, such as length of formal schooling of parents, were matched, or formalized SES scales were mechanically applied in ignorance of their partial inapplicability. It is clear that the blacks and whites in these studies could not have been socially "equal" in any real sense, and that the black children in the studies almost certainly partook of considerably more lower-class life-styles than the whites.

In all then, only two of these studies both support Jensen's claim about "actual matching" or "statistical equating" *and* show a decisive IQ difference. These were both studies of adults (soldiers and college students). IQ tests at that age have considerably less reliability than at younger ages, their subjects having been long removed from a state of innocence about the purpose of testing, the nature and desirability of rational test behavior, and the types of materials that tests (even "abstract" tests) cover. Thus neither of those studies is likely to tell us anything about "innate intelligence." Once we look carefully at the "control" of SES variables, we find that there are twice as many "controlled studies" that falsify Jensen's claim as support it!

The remaining six studies reported by Shuey are supposed to bolster the assertion about "upper-status" blacks being intellectually inferior even to "lower-status" whites. That is the single most important empirical claim Jensen has ever made, and the one he relies on most. If it is true, as he continually points out, no one can in good conscience support the hypothesis that environmental differences account for racial IQ differences.

In fact, however, none of the six studies Jensen refers to supports his claim.

A 1940s study from Winston-Salem is perhaps the most interesting of the six, though Shuey and Jensen fail to find the points of most interest in it.[14] When blacks and whites were matched by occupational title, there was a great disparity (more than one SD) between black and white "salesmen," and between black and white "railroad workers." There was a lesser disparity between black and white "factory workers," and only one-half SD between black and white "barbers and beauticians" or "truck-drivers." The real lesson of this study is thus the opposite of the one Shuey and Jensen draw from it. *The more alike the actual work done by the subjects, the closer their average IQs; where whites tend to be supervisors and blacks laborers, the spread gets greater.* All of this supports the egalitarian/environmental interpretation, of course.

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There is also a category for blacks called "professionals," which indeed shows a lower mean IQ than white factory workers—but a lower mean also than that of black butchers and bakers. White professionals are described as "accountants, auditors, bookkeepers, managers, clerks, engineers," in a city in which the blacks were still concentrated "in the simpler tasks" and had in their homes "few of the appurtenances of our modern culture." Occupations, as it turns out, were specified by the children themselves, and it is perfectly clear from the internal evidence that in that segregated southern city few of the many black people described as "professionals" could possibly have been professional at all in the sense described by the professions listed in the quotation above. That black butchers should have had higher average IQs than black "professionals"—a complete and (if true) inexplicable reversal of the pattern for whites—should have alerted any disinterested or unbiased reader to the spuriousness of the comparison. Shuey and Jensen were quite evidently neither.

(Jensen's lack of scrupulousness about his "data" is revealed even more strikingly by the fact that he also enlists in his cause—*HER,* p. 84; *Educability,* p. 240—a study for the Civil Rights Commission, despite the fact that the author of that study makes this very same point about his own characterization of blacks as "professionals," pointing out as an example that blacks in his segregated city who list themselves as "ministers" routinely do manual labor. The author of that study also notes that SES differences among blacks are considerably less than among whites, and suggests that that is because there are much fewer genuinely middle-class blacks in the community.[15])

The other studies follow this pattern. One unpublished master's thesis is from another segregated southern school system in the 1940s and contains no occupational comparisons at all, the children being identified instead as from "superior" or "inferior" backgrounds by their teachers, "the ratings in each case to be relative to the particular classroom group." The study thus completely falsifies Shuey's and Jensen's account of it, and it seems almost superfluous to add that it also falsifies their conclusion: the black students described by their teachers as being of "superior" background, compared to other black students, outdid the analogously described "inferior" white students by six IQ points.

A third study, from a southern city in the late 1950s, assigns SES solely on the basis of educational attainment of parents, thus again completely missing the real points of comparison.[16] A fourth study from the only junior high school of a northern industrial city attributes status solely on the basis of "occupational level of father"—a categorization that is virtually meaningless since, as Jencks points out, there is almost as much income (and thus social class) variation within as there is between occupations. Moreover, internal evidence again reveals that more than 10 percent of the black subjects exceed the white mean by about one SD—which is just about what we would expect on the basis of a comparative class analysis from that period, thus demonstrating further that "mean IQ by occupational title" (which fails to turn up this 10 percent) is a futile rubric for ranking the IQs of blacks.[17]

Worst of all, a fifth study, from St. Louis in the 1950s, makes comparisons between black children from schools "serving the best residential area of appreciable size available to St. Louis Negroes," and white children from three schools serving "the downtown, river-industrial areas." In a moment of incredible forgetfulness, Shuey lets us know that, based on census data given in the original (unpublished) study, "the high socioeconomic group of the Negroes would be equivalent to some point between the low and middle socioeconomic groups of the whites but nearer the former" (Shuey, p. 114). Their mean IQ is also nearer that of the "low" whites . . . only *one IQ point* away, in fact. The only surprising thing about this study, then, is that Shuey and Jensen could bring themselves to use it as an argument for the genetic superiority of whites!

The sixth study, finally, from a northern

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elementary school in the early 1960s, makes a more determined effort at matching class characteristics, though relying on the very dubious measures of the prestige ratings of occupations and education of the "main breadwinner" in a family. This study, on reanalysis, shows the top 15 percent of blacks having a mean IQ at about the national average, 5 points above that of the bottom 45 percent of whites in the study, and slightly above that of the bottom 80 percent of whites in the study (when their means are pooled).[18] And these findings, which dramatically falsify Shuey's and Jensen's reports, are even less striking than those of a later study (and misrepresented by Jensen in order to soften its impact) in which the "Upper SES Negro" IQ mean is only slightly below that of "Upper SES white," but more than one SD above that of "Lower SES white"![19]

V

The truth of the matter, in sum, is that Jensen has written hundreds of pages of tendentious theorizing to "explain" a set of "facts" that does not exist and thus neither requires nor supports his explanation. All of these studies make the same point—and it is not Jensen's point. It is very hard, in a racially discriminatory society, to equate any indices of social well-being among the races. *But the harder we try, the more the alleged IQ gap disappears.*

It is incomprehensible that Jensen can have failed to see this, since he himself states that "15 percent of the Negro population exceeds the white average"—a figure that, to repeat, is just about what we would have predicted on the basis of a totally environmentalist and egalitarian theory of the differences in measured intelligence among racial and ethnic groups. Not only that, but in an astonishingly self-contradictory passage Jensen remarks that "Negro grooms (in interracial marriages) were occupationally well above the average employed Negro male," and that therefore "the higher IQs of interracial children born to white mothers [rather than to black mothers who allegedly tend to marry low-status white men—P.G.] could be due to the genetic effect of the superior Negro father. . . ." How a "superior" father who but 11 pages later becomes inferior (as Shuey and Jensen assert) to "the lowest SES white group" can have that strikingly positive genetic effect is a question Jensen does not attempt to answer. He could not, since any such attempt to explain away a naked self-contradiction would only highlight the fraudulence of the interracial "comparisons" that are the rockbottom foundation of his antiegalitarianism.

(There is one study, and one study only, that unambiguously shows the effect Shuey and Jensen describe, for young children—although that study too makes social status assignments on a very puzzling basis, and the author comments that "social-class groups of children were far more differentiated among whites than among blacks, despite the same criteria for assignment." In any event Jensen would be much wiser not to mention this study at all, since it also reports a generally low proportion of genetic variance among its black subjects.[20] Jensen also cites the Coleman Report, in a cryptic reference, as having replicated this finding. But he must have in mind a "Coleman Report" that no one else has ever seen, since no such data appear in the famous one that James S. Coleman produced for the Office of Education of HEW.)

Having seen all of Jensen's "evidence" vanish into dust, we have no reason at all (aside, again, from intellectual curiosity) to be interested in his final argument: his insistent use of comparisons among various American minorities in derogation of blacks' accomplishments. Few of the relationships he produces are significant, but all are easily susceptible of cultural explanations that Jensen misses only because he is insensitive to the complex nature of culture in a pluralist society. (Generally, among sociological matters Jensen is like a naive behaviorist run amok. His attempts to decompose and "measure" the effects of an entire way of life are often comical—see, e.g., pp. 171 and 198 of *Educability*. Some of his comparisons between "successful" and "unsuccessful" eth-

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nic groups or national populations are at best disingenuous, as when he compares the scores attained by Japanese citizens living in Japan on a translated and modified version of an English-language IQ test, with the scores attained by American blacks—as though the two groups were culturally comparable.)

Some subpopulations come from cultures that have adopted a modernized life-style to an extraordinarily aggressive degree, while others are still torn between old ways and new; different groups have in the past emphasized intellectual attainment, as opposed to other kinds, for reasons that have nothing to do with genes; some ethnic groups, though alienated within American society, relate strongly to an external culture that they are still proud of, while others do not. Jensen misses all of this; he is able to write about one intergroup comparison that "especially for children who have been exposed to three or four years of schooling, such marked differences in performance would seem difficult to explain in terms of differential experiences, motivation, and the like" just as though Banfield had not written an entire book explaining certain aspects of black life in America wholly as a function of "differential" motivation. One can and ought to differ with Banfield over whether the disproportionate amount of culturally and personally self-destructive behavior among blacks is a "rational" response to over a century of oppression, or if it has become blameworthy, willful behavior; but in either case the result is the same—an ultimately *environmental* explanation.

Even the comparatively high nonverbal IQ performance of some groups of American Indians, in which Jensen oddly takes an almost personal pride as another "stick" with which to "beat" blacks, would be easily explainable by cultural factors if we had never heard of genetics. But no matter. Suppose Jensen were to insist on his genetic hypothesis—and we may certainly agree that there may be some differences among the different mating populations that have been "racially" constituted, since there are marginal differences among races for most traits, and no reason why that shouldn't also be true of "intelligence." Given what our restudies of social backgrounds show about the real relationship between black and white life-style and performance in America, advocates of social equality need hardly be concerned with these last of Jensen's comparisons. On the basis of what we have seen so far, the most likely *genetic* relationships would seem to be that whites and blacks are roughly equal in "innate intelligence," Orientals are somewhat more advanced and Amerindians are a lot smarter than anyone else. Jensen is certainly free to believe all that, if he wishes—just as Indians are free to wonder about the virtue of having high IQs.

But as for the interracial comparisons on which such an imposing structure of biological antiegalitarianism has been erected, it suffices to say that not only does the race/IQ relationship reflect the realities of social division in America; so too does Arthur Jensen's scholarship.

VI

What can we say in conclusion? We can hardly insist that racial equality has been "proven" any more than racial inequality has been. It is possible (anything is "possible" to an empiricist) that generations from now, when a black middle class has finally had the opportunity to develop on equal terms with the white middle class, there may still be more than marginal IQ differences between the races. And shrimps may whistle.

We can, however, say two things. First, we can point out, as I did in the first of these articles that, by any reckoning, intelligence—the ability to cope with problems life sets for us or we set for ourselves—is something that can be and has been modified, taught, improved, adapted; it is in no way a primarily biological and unmalleable phenomenon like eye color, somatic type, blood type, or length of bones, so far as we can tell.

Second, we can and should note the fascinating and finally persuasive historical

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circumstance, that all of the deficiencies Jensen finds in the intellectual performance of black people were found but a few generations ago in the measured performance of other ethnic groups as well. Thus one imaginative researcher who has, unlike Shuey or Jensen, investigated what data there are, found that well into the 20th century the disparity between the IQs of "native whites" and Italian schoolchildren was on the average even greater than what now exists between blacks and whites; and he reports that the debate over "immigrant" versus "native" intelligence (or "Latin" and "Slavic" versus "Nordic" and "Anglo-Saxon" intelligence) followed exactly the same path Jensen has marked out today, culminating in the conclusion that the intellectual inferiority of various immigrant groups had been scientifically demonstrated to be genetic in origin![21]

One of the founders of intelligence-testing in America asserted that of the European immigrants arriving at Ellis Island in 1912, IQ testing showed 85 percent of the Jews, 80 percent of the Hungarians, and 79 percent of the Italians to be "feeble-minded"; while another psychologist assured the House of Representatives that IQ tests were "objective," and thus problems of language had nothing to do with the finding that "the Slavic and Latin countries show a marked contrast in intelligence with the western and northern European group. . . "[22]

All of these groups, as well as the Irish and others who were found to be "subnormal" at the time, have long since left behind them any vestige of their alleged inability to perform an average function in American society. To be sure, certain marked differences among groups still remain. Italians and Jews do not have the same average IQ; Greek-Americans and Chinese-Americans do not have the same likelihood of becoming nuclear physicists. But none of these differences is of interest to egalitarians—and none of them should be of interest to anti-egalitarians. Egalitarians do not assert the proposition that all people are equal in measurable "intelligence," nor anything like it. The egalitarians' view is only that human environment is more crucial to human accomplishment than the genetic factor, just as it is more crucial to the state of our teeth, and that therefore the more we can equalize or attenuate the impact of the most powerfully destructive environmental influences, the more likely we are to produce citizens all of whom are capable of making a useful contribution to their community, and thus deserving reward from it.

In the next issue of *Dissent* I shall discuss the further question, whether the existence of sharp IQ differences within ethnic and racial groups preordains a stratified class structure even were we to eliminate inequalities between groups. But as to our present topic, it is enough to note that most of the eximmigrant groups have by now got to the point where they are able to hold their own in our society as it is presently constituted, and that they would be able to do even better in a more egalitarian society. Though differences exist, especially in the high IQ range, no one has recently argued that any of the white ethnic groups need have innate difficulty in achieving full-fledged participation in a modern economy.

Why should there be different expectations for blacks? In the absence of any data at all showing different racial intelligence when social factors are "held constant" even to the limited extent that social scientists are able to accomplish, we ought to find it conclusive that other ethnic groups from many different parts of the world have been able to make their separate ways, albeit at different rates of progress, in American society. Blacks should be inherently able to do as well as anyone else: *unless we prejudge their "inferiority" on purely racist grounds.* It is impossible to argue (or even hold a discussion) with anyone who is racially prejudiced and content to remain that way. But *prima facie* racism, which is the only available "argument" left to support Jensen's case, can be of no interest to those who wish to give serious consideration to the notion of social equality.

Certainly, there are impelling historical reasons why blacks, or any others who are

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both poor and excluded in 1976, may well have a comparatively hard row to hoe. These remaining minorities, at a time when the economic growth seems not to keep up with its past pace, make up a very disproportionate segment of the lower class, the lumpen-proletariat of Marx's scathing description. The American majority and American elites may well find it too costly—this is the real message of Banfield's *Unheavenly City*—to adopt the policies necessary to eliminate this final bastion of ethnic inequality. But these problems of policy and cost have nothing to do with the inherent qualities of races. From a genetic standpoint, once we have seen that the statistical "evidence" for innate black inferiority disintegrates when exposed to the harsh light of inspection, we have no reason to doubt that blacks *could* follow the same path as Irish, Italians, Poles, Jews, etc.; the Pittsburgh study described above is one piece of evidence suggesting that process has begun. Moreover, the minimal egalitarian demand of "equal opportunity" for a *group* in a society such as our own, one with an unequal reward structure, is easily satisfied. The jobs of which it has reasonably been said that they require both noticeably above-average intelligence (as measured by IQ) *and* above-average rewards—say, those of executives, corporation lawyers, and organizers of advanced technical systems in this country—are not that numerous. Even now, when so much effort is still needed to equalize social conditions, there are undoubtedly more than enough highly, or potentially highly, intelligent black or brown or red people to fill such positions in proportion to their general representation in the American population. No doubt, each of us can think of many more positions that, we could claim, ought to be filled only by the highly intelligent, but remarkably few such positions lay claim to a markedly disproportionate share in society's rewards. (Jensen, casting around for examples of tasks that require a very high level of intellectual skill, mentions chess-playing, piano-playing, orchestral conducting, and playwriting—hardly professions or jobs earning a high level of average reward in this society.)

In the end, therefore, a serious discussion of the possibilities of equality must dismiss Jensen's biological antiegalitarianism. His data are irrelevant or corrupted, his arguments unsound or meretricious, and his understanding of human society is virtually nil. The existence of genetically different human races within one society is not a necessary obstacle to the attainment of equality; if we wish to justify our inegalitarian behavior, we must look elsewhere.[23] □

Notes

1. Edward Banfield, Daniel Bell, Christopher Jencks, and the world-famous geneticist Theodosius Dobzhansky are only a few of the many prominent scholars in diverse fields who have seen Jensen's work in this light.

2. A recent book that makes a cautious attempt to justify the theoretical propositions I have criticized is John C. Loehlin, Gardner Lindzey, and J.N. Spuhler, *Race Differences in Intelligence* (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman, 1975). The interested reader will want to compare their arguments with the ones I offered in the Spring 1976 *Dissent*, as well as with the lengthy discussion by Block and Dworkin cited in footnote 3 of that article.

3. In at least three chapters of *Educability* Jensen does develop statistical models that produce an apparently genetic and theoretical explanation for observed black/white IQ differences, when allegedly relevant background conditions are "controlled" in setting the parameters of the models' operations. But these models produce their results only because the fabulous .80 heritability factor —for which, as I observed in my earlier article, there is little or no warrant—is fed into them. Thus these "proofs" are not only theoretical but also circular: proof of nothing but the truism that if you take an equation that is supposed to give a causal explanation of variance, and one term in the equation is for the genetic determination of variance, and you feed a high value into this term, you will find that the variance is "caused" genetically. No doubt.

4. In discussing —and discounting—the effects of early brain damage, Jensen relies heavily on a pioneering and questionable study of "development quotients" which purports to show that initially black infants are physically more precocious, but later fall behind white children. If one insists on genetic explanations for this data in the face of at least one perfectly obvious cultural explanation, the

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only possible one is that blacks are genetically superior with respect to certain motor abilities or propensities—a possibility that would not discomfit egalitarians but does discomfit Jensen. He handles this embarrassment by making what seems to be a deliberately false statement about the relationship between the means in two sets of measurements and the size of the variance in the two sets; those with a background in statistics will find his blatant falsehood on p. 345 of *Educability*. On another occasion, when a discussion about the *total* variance in IQ measurements for blacks and whites seems to be leading in a discomfiting direction, he suddenly begins to discuss *genetic* variance, thus by definition upholding his own hypothesis about the genetic factor in IQ—see p. 215 of *Educability*, and the preceding discussion.

5. In his discussion of nutrition, Jensen refers to one unpublished study, allegedly supporting his position, of which, despite diligent efforts, the Smith College research librarians have been unable to unearth a copy.

6. Zena A. Stein and Hannah Kassab, "Nutrition," in *Mental Retardation* Joseph Wortis, ed., vol. 2 (New York: Grune & Stratton, 1970), pp. 92-117, see especially pp. 110-11. Jensen makes a researcher's work a bit difficult by citing the article in vol. 1.

7. Marion M. DeLemos, "The Development of Conservation in Aboriginal Children," *International Journal of Psychology,"* 4 (1969), pp. 255-69.

8. "How Much Can We Boost IQ and Scholastic Achievement?" *Harvard Educational Review*, 39 (Winter 1969), pp. 1-123. The page references I give here are to the reprint in *Environment, Heredity, and Intelligence, Harvard Educational Review* Reprint Series# 2.

9. Among other things, Jensen compares a 1963 sample of blacks from five southeastern states (where IQ, white and especially black, is generally lowest) with a 1937 sample of whites from all over the U.S. He then falsifies the table he is commenting on by aggregating and thereby changing the nature of the two top quintiles (upper and upper-middle SES); this action has the effect of creating statistical relationships between blacks and whites that seem to demand a genetic explanation, whereas the more or less real relationships (if we can discount the time and place factors!) in the original table could not possibly have supported such an explanation statistically. Finally, he misuses the geneticist's concept of "filial regression to the mean" by analyzing its effects only at upper SES levels and ignoring them at the lower levels; he thus again salvages his genetic hypothesis by misusing data, in that if genetic laws, including that of regression to the mean, were operating, the white/black retardation ratio at the lowest level of SES would make no sense.

10. B. Pasamanick and Hilda Knobloch, "Retrospective Studies on the Epidemiology of Reproductive Casualty: Old and New," *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly of Behavior and Development*, 12 (1966), pp. 7-26. Jensen's genetic "explanation" is that a high rate of reproductive casualty is "related to the genetic heterogeneity of the ancestral gene pools of the American Negro" (p. 348). Demographers will be interested to learn that American whites have relatively homogeneous "ancestral gene pools," and geneticists may be a bit surprised to learn that homogeneous gene pools ("inbreeding!") are a good thing.

11. Christopher Jencks *et al, Inequality* (New York: Basic Books; 1972), pp. 141 and 218.

12. Richard J. Light and Paul V. Smith, "Social Allocation Models of Intelligence," *Science, Heritability, and IQ*, in the Harvard Educational Review Reprint Series # 4 (1969), p. 5.

13. Audrey M. Shuey, *The Testing of Negro Intelligence*, 2nd ed. (New York: Social Science Press 1966).

14. Arthur M. Jordan, "Efficiency of Group Tests of Intelligence in Discovering the Mentally Deficient," *High School Journal*, 31 (1948), pp. 73-94.

15. Alan B. Wilson, "Educational Consequences of Segregation in a California Community," in *Racial Isolation in the Public Schools*, Appendices, vol. 2 of the Report of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1967; see p. 174.

16. This study also is unpublished: a Ph.D. dissertation. In this as in the previous case, Shuey provides enough information to falsify her claims on the basis of internal evidence, though she, as always, fails to take note of that information.

17. Ruth C. Wylie, "Children's Estimates of Their Schoolwork Ability, as a Function of Sex, Race, and Socioeconomic Level," *Journal of Personality*, 31 (1963), pp. 203-24.

18. Martin Deutsch and Bert Brown, "Social Influences in Negro-white Intelligence Differences," *Journal of Social Issues*, 20 (1964), pp. 24-35. Shuey "hides" the findings of this study (as does Jensen after her) by amalgamating them with the other five studies (some of which had much larger sample populations), as though the data and the control methods were comparable. We have seen that they were not, but the amalgamation serves the purpose of freeing Shuey and Jensen from having to pay real attention to an embarrassing datum.

19. S.R. Tulkin, "Race, Class, Family, and School Achievement," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 9 (1968), pp. 31-37. Jensen's performance in concealing the nature and impact of Tulkin's findings is almost brilliant (*Educability*, pp. 237-38).

20. Sandra Scarr-Salapatek, "Race, Social Class, and IQ," *Science*, 174 (Dec. 24, 1971), pp. 1285-95.

21. David K. Cohen, "Immigrants and the Schools," *Review of Educational Research*, 4 (Feb. 1970), pp. 13-28.

22. See Clarence J. Karier, "Testing for Order and Control in the Corporate Liberal State," *Educational Theory*, 22 (Spring 1972), pp. 154-80; see especially p. 163.

23. Since the preparation of this article and my previous one, reports have been published on three interesting pieces of research; each of them suggests an environmentalist interpretation—such as that advanced here—of both the malleability of the IQ gap and the reasons for its existence. I will report on those findings in the Fall issue of *Dissent*. □

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H. Brand

The Myth of a Capital Shortage

The idea of a potential capital shortage has been insistently argued by Administration officials and given academic respectability by Harvard professors and Brookings Institution researchers. It has also gained wide currency by alarming projections and been the subject of inquiry by congressional committees. Yet it remains an elusive conception, the more so since it has been advanced throughout the current recession, when utilization of tangible industrial capital—machinery, equipment, structures—has run at 70 percent or less of optimal levels, bank loans to business have been declining) and corporate liquidity, badly straitened in the boom period 1973-74, has been rapidly restored. These conditions would seem to indicate a surfeit, not a scarcity, of capital.

True, the "shortage" is anticipatory rather than actual; it will take place unless, in the words of Secretary of the Treasury Simon, we "will make a fundamental shift . . . away from continued growth in personal consumption and government spending, and toward greater savings, capital formation, and investment."[1] But if virtually all economists including those in the Treasury Department, with their expensive computers and research staffs, failed to foresee the deepest slump since the late '30s, why should one now have confidence in their prognostications of a capital shortage?

One should not. Still, the argument is politically too weighty to be dismissed out of hand. It also points to changes in the conditions of capital accumulation that need to be examined.

A possible capital shortage was first perceived in 1973, a year of inflationary boom. Fears of a capital shortage usually arise at critical junctures of business cycles. They stem from an inability (or growing difficulty) to expand debt. True, for every debt an asset is created, but this does not mean that debt can be expanded indefinitely. During booms, assets (e.g., plant, equipment, machinery, inventories, real estate, as well as entire companies) are acquired at ever higher purchase prices. This spells ever higher face amounts for the loans, bonds or stocks by which they are financed. Such acquisitions are often speculative. The inventory buying of 1973-74, for example, represented to a large extent a hedging against higher prices. Moreover, loans made to purchase additional assets are then often secured on the expected higher price of a lien, thus creating an ever more labile debt structure.

In time, however, the accumulation of stocks of capital at ever higher purchase prices is slowed or ended; it becomes more problematical to realize anticipated rates of return. Markets become quickly saturated as real incomes decline, owing to the inflationary forces of the boom, and as employment levels off and unemployment rises. The very threat of this development imperils the values on which the repayment of debt is predicated. The entire financial structure is seen to be at risk, since a downward valuation of assets might be in the offing. At such conjunctures, credit policies are tightened. At the very time when it becomes more difficult to expand sales volume, and thus to raise the funds for further expansion or for debt repayment, it becomes also more difficult to obtain additional credit. A "capital shortage" appears to be in the making (businessmen call it a "liquidity squeeze").

This "capital shortage" represents a paradox—a contradiction of the capitalist system—arising toward the end of a boom that generated enormous amounts of capital, a buildup of physical and financial assets so vast as to threaten a collapse of values. If in contrast to the developments of the early '30s (when prices slumped and values col-

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lapsed) that threat appears to be less acute today, it is because inflation, sustained by huge federal budget deficits, persists through recessions, feeding corporate cash flows.

This interpretation of capital shortage differs radically from Secretary Simon's, who along with other economists holds or implies that personal consumption together with government spending have grown at rates that preempt the funds and resources needed for capital formation. *But there is no evidence for such preemption.* Over the past two decades, the constant-dollar shares of personal consumption, fixed capital investment other than residential housing, and government purchases of goods and services have fluctuated very little. It is true that government spending and government credit operations vitally affect investment decisions, but essentially they are catalysts of, not impediments to, capital formation.

In what follows, we will not be detained by the details of recent projections of a "capital shortage." These projections are devoid of any foundation in historical experience. Rather, we will first examine aspects of capital formation over the past decade. We will then analyze certain interpretations of the reasons for the presumed capital shortage, reasons that will prove to be an ideological guise justifying measures to strengthen the ownership of capital assets. Finally, we will offer a critique of the solutions that are proposed to deal with the capital shortage. These solutions would in essence require the federal budget to distribute resources toward the owners of capital, even while their efficacy of contributing to capital formation would be severely in doubt.

II

AMONG THE MORE critical developments of the late '60s and early '70s was a rapid rise in corporate indebtedness. In 1965, corporate debt exceeded the dollar value of corporate output by 16 percent; in 1974, by 55 percent. Corporate debt rose much faster than either consumer or government debt. Its rise has in large part been related to evident difficulties in generating sufficient internal funds, i.e., cash flow from undistributed profits and capital consumption (depreciation) allowances. Until 1967, these two items together accounted for two-thirds or more of the total, internal and external, sources of corporate funds. Thereafter, their relative importance contracted to well below one-half, while that of external sources, such as bond issues and bank loans, expanded. (New stock issues remained of little significance.)

The question why the corporate debt expanded so rapidly over the 1965-74 decade cannot be fully answered without examining changes in the asset structure of corporations. Corporate mergers or large-scale speculative purchases of land undoubtedly played a big role in accelerating corporate indebtedness, but to this writer's knowledge no comprehensive data on these matters existed. Therefore, only a partial answer to the question can here be advanced.

First, there was a slowdown in labor productivity resulting from a combination of retarded output growth and a reluctance at the time to discharge employees so as to raise output per man-hour. This reluctance was linked to expectations of continued boom conditions. But it raised unit labor costs, which in turn limited profit gains and hence also the amount of profits for reinvestment. Official price controls in the early '70s probably were a factor, preventing business from fully passing on the rise in costs to consumers, so that the pressure on retained profits was partially compensated by going into debt.

Second, and this is an explanation I do not find fully acceptable, capital consumption allowances are said to have become less and less adequate because they are based on historical cost—the original purchasing price—of machinery, equipment, and structures. Inflation creates a growing gap between original and current prices of capital goods—and business, it is claimed, is forced to go into debt in order to bridge the gap, unless depreciation allowances are based on replacement costs.

The argument is flawed since, first of all, the higher cost of replacements is offset in part by their higher productivity. The progressive liberalization of depreciation schedules since 1962 and the investment tax credit also then instituted have increasingly offset the rise in replacement costs. Under the 1962 law, 48 percent of newly purchased machinery and equipment could be recovered in the first three years; under the law's 1971 amendment, 55 percent; and under its 1975 amendment, 61 percent. Now 95 percent of the cost of such capital goods can be recovered within seven years.[2] The liberalizations in depreciation writeoffs partially account for the decline in the share of reported profits in total corporate product over the past decade.

Elaborate arguments have been advanced that seek to demonstrate the destructive impact of inflation on corporate profits and capital formation. Secretary Simon, in a statement before the House Ways and Means Committee in January

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1975, turned the 71-percent increase in reported after-tax profits between 1965 and 1974 into a 50-percent *decline* for the period, after he had "adjusted" for the "understatement" in capital consumption allowances and the effect of inflation on inventory valuation. He also calculated that undistributed profits had dropped so precipitously that for 1974 the figure was "a minus of nearly $10 billion. That means that there was not nearly enough even to replace existing capacity, and nothing to finance investment in additional new capacity."[3] Elsewhere, the Secretary has said that the large share of investment needed for replacement and modernization of existing facilities does "not add to the total productive capacity of our economy."[4] All this is mostly fallacious, for it implies that stagnation, if not disinvestment, have characterized the U.S. economy in the past decade

Between 1965 and 1974 outlays for producer durables and structures rose 176 percent, while the purchase prices of these capital goods rose 56 percent. Therefore their real value increased 78 percent.[5] On a first accounting, then, roughly one-half of total corporate funds was needed to offset the declining purchasing power of the dollar. Ever larger sums were required to buy a *given* basket of capital goods. However, there are no "givens" in capital goods. New capital never merely replaces the old; it brings the existing stock of capital "to the latest level of efficiency."[6] Let us assume that, over the 1965-74 span, the replacements of, and new additions to, the stock of capital improved about the same rate as labor productivity—17 percent. If we then add this gain to the gain in the real value of capital goods replacements and additions, we arrive at the difference between total funds laid out for capital goods and their inflationary component, which, on this reckoning, amounted to about one-third. Inflation thus constituted a less than perilous threat to capital formation.

The incurring of long-term debt also means, in the present era at least, that it is repaid in cheaper dollars. This represents a capital gain to the debtor. This capital gain partially offsets the supposed erosion in after-tax profits caused by inflation and the inability to pass on higher costs. In fact, it has been calculated that, for large corporations, this capital gain offsets the presumed shortfall in depreciation writeoffs based as they are on the original purchase cost of capital goods.[7]

If no capital shortage can be demonstrated for the industrial core of the economy, the activities of the banks over the past few years also show conclusively that very large amounts of capital can be generated for speculative and related profitable purposes. These purposes are often unrelated to any ultimately productive objectives, let alone social goals.[8] Banks—

> rapidly increased the number and size of foreign branches, moved aggressively into direct lease financing, provided extensive credits for the acquisition and holding of land, expanded considerable trading operations in currencies and securities and furnished financing for the heavy accumulation of business inventories . . . In addition, they extended loans to finance company takeovers, corporate purchases of their own outstanding shares and "luxury-type" expenditures by middle and upper income families.[9]

Banks "were helping to finance the growing volume of speculation" that characterizes inflationary boom periods, writes Arnold Diamond in the study prepared for the Joint Economic Committee that has been quoted above. Diamond identifies several specific areas of speculation and calculates the gross amounts of credit extended by commercial and savings banks. We briefly summarize his data in what follows.

1. *Stock market credit:* Despite the decline in stock prices in 1974, margin credit extended to commercial banks and brokers (primarily financed by the banks) totaled more than $5 billion at the end of September 1974, $7 billion a year earlier, and $9 billion two years earlier.

2. *Land and land redevelopment loans:* Such loans involve the purchase of unimproved pockets of land, usually in suburban areas, whose value is expected to rise as development of the urban ring proceeds. Withholding of land, of course, raises the price of land undergoing development and is a major factor in suburban sprawl. Such loans are held by banks as well as by nonbank mortgage lending institutions, which are heavily financed by the banks. They tripled over the 3¾ years that ended September 30, 1974, reaching nearly $13 billion. Loans by commercial banks to mortgage companies and real estate investment trusts rose to more than $34 billion by September 1974, from $15.5 billion three years earlier.

3. *Currency transactions:* American banks maintained 621 branches abroad at the end of 1973. These branches held $118 billion in assets. These assets were mostly traded between the branches and foreign banks. "The extent of . . . currency speculation is revealed by the fact that at the end of December 1974 . . . future contracts to buy or sell foreign exchange . . . and bullion for foreign branches of all [Federal Reserve] member banks

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aggregated $105.8 billion or 90 percent of their total assets. . . ."[10] Hedging against currency fluctuations is a normal banking activity, and the purely speculative element therefore cannot be readily determined. But the bankruptcies of such banks as Franklin National in New York or Herstatt in West Germany, caused by foreign exchange losses, entailed large if less ruinous losses suffered by banks in the U.S. and suggests that the speculative element has been substantial.

4. *Inventories:* It is generally believed that tight monetary policies restrict credit. But during the 1973-74 period of tight money, only the residential housing sector suffered a severe dearth of credit. Short-term bank loans to business, especially to finance inventories, rose during the first nine months of 1974 by 19 percent over the corresponding year-before period—to $467 billion. Businessmen "experienced little difficulty in obtaining increasingly larger loans. Comparable increases in bankers' acceptances and commercial paper issuances by nonfinancial companies attest further to this credit ease."[11]

5. *Loans to foreigners:* Bank loans to foreigners, classified as claims on foreigners, sharply rose between 1973 and 1974, nearly doubling in the first three-quarters of 1974, to $20 billion. While normally more funds flow into than out of the United States, outflows rapidly rose in relation to inflows in 1974, despite supposedly stringent domestic credit conditions.

High interest rates do not deter borrowing by business because of the tax deductibility of interest, so that business shoulders only about half of the cost of the interest it pays on loans. This is the main reason why business can outbid housing for funds when these are otherwise in "scarce" supply.

It is worth noting that federal agencies have come to dominate the market for residential mortgages, but that mortgage funds remain tight and very expensive. At least here, it might seem, a "capital shortage" prevails. Certainly, one of the reasons for it is that the ultimate disposition of the proceeds from the mortgages these agencies acquire—close to $15 billion in 1975 or nearly two-fifths of total mortgage fund flows that year—is not, and under present conditions cannot be, controlled. That is, these proceeds can be used to finance any profitable investment that the seller of the mortgages chooses, and often in areas other than residential housing.[12]

The rapid expansion of credit at historically high interest rates in 1973 and 1974 indicated high anticipated profitability of loans as well as lenders' expectations that continued inflation ensured profit, or at least would bail them out, should defaults occur. Only in some instances have these expectations been sorely disappointed; in certain major real estate investments, loans have had to be "refinanced" or written off altogether. Other loan losses too have not been insignificant. But a repetition of the banking crisis of the '30s was averted chiefly by the stabilizing effects of the federal budget deficit on incomes and output, and on the financial values embodied in bank loans.

More generally, the slump that began in the fall of 1974 would have had devastatingly deflationary effects had it not been for the huge federal deficits cushioning the drop in incomes and output, which prevented a collapse of values and of the financial system in its train. The oft-repeated comparisons with the '30s were not inappropriate, but they omitted to take account of the role of federal financial flows. The deficit—generated by tax cuts, a shrinking tax base, rising unemployment insurance payments, and increases in other income supports—averaged $73 billion for all of 1975 but rose to $102 billion in the spring quarter of that year. The deficit restored neither employment levels nor incomes to previous levels, yet it sustained the price system and its inflationary pressures. For the deficit had its counterpart in a rapid increase in the volume of gross business savings (i.e., cash flow consisting of retained profits and depreciation writeoffs)—and this really protected business and the financial system against a crisis of liquidity and deflation. Such a crisis never developed on any generalized scale. The gross savings of nonfinancial business rose 29 percent in 1975; they were used largely to pay off bank loans and refinance such short-term debt with bond issues. Expenditures for plant, equipment, and inventories, on the other hand—i.e., capital spending—dropped 18 percent; financial liabilities were incurred at comparatively very low rates. Thus the threat of a corporate debt collapse was greatly mitigated; relief was afforded by what in effect was the absorption of the federal budget deficit in corporate cash flow.[13]

In sum, the spuriousness of "capital shortage" is patent. Industry and commerce did not find it difficult to finance one of the great capital goods and real estate booms in the annals of capitalism. The banks expended vast sums on speculative investments. While Secretary Simon and others appear concerned with the future supply of capital, their failure to review the recent past in light of this concern makes their assumptions highly dubious.

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III

NEVERTHELESS, it is necessary to go beyond a demonstration of recent developments pertaining to capital investment. For underlying concern with an impending capital shortage is the belief that the growth in consumption, particularly the expanding consumption claims transmitted through the federal budget, increasingly diminishes the resources available for capital formation—i.e., that this growth in consumption has tended to redirect the allocation of resources so as to threaten the future productivity, strength, and living standards.

In the words of one of the more articulate business analysts, this redirection stems from the political and social pressures toward the "equalization" of incomes that is characteristic of modern societies. These societies "find [the] frustration of consumption to be increasingly difficult because the structures required for the purpose are unpopular and often in apparent conflict with an attractive social goal."[14] The progressive equalization of incomes, or the attempt to attain it, is associated with rising pressures of consumption on supply and generates competition for scarce resources. "This is one of the general causes of inflation in developed societies, perhaps the most important."[15] Inflation would not have any allocational consequences, were it not that consumption incomes tend to "track the inflation rate," while business incomes generally do not. That is, such categories of income as social security, unemployment compensation, and welfare are indexed to keep pace with the price level; and nominal wages continue to rise even in periods of declining output. Business income, on the other hand, absorbs much of the inflation in costs, partly because it must take the full brunt of the government's anti-inflation effort—i.e., regulatory restraints; price controls (on fuels, rents); partial price freezes or periodic resort to mandatory controls (or the threat of them). All "inhibit the growth of business incomes under conditions of cost inflation."[16]

In this view, then, inflation does not merely manifest a covert struggle between social classes over the distribution of the gains from economic activity, in which conflicting claims are somehow reconciled by economic growth. Rather, inflation tends to be inherently inimical to capital formation on which economic growth depends. A "deterioration of investment environment" has accompanied (and presumably resulted from) the shift in economic policy from "aggregative goals" during the first two decades of the postwar period to "distributive goals" since 1965. It accounts for the "declining vigor in the response of profits to business expansion" over the past decade, and "is the most general reason for the present preoccupation of businessmen with fears of a capital shortage."[17]

The nub of the problem is the presumed policy to "equalize" incomes. "The apparent stability of the U.S. income distribution over 20 years of strenuous effort toward equalization—including enormous growth of transfer payments, and a steeply progressive personal income tax, and the implementation of antipoverty programs—is . . . almost certainly misleading"—i.e., the available data, which indicate no significant change, obscure conflicting underlying trends. (For example, earlier retirement, or the splitting-up of households, with younger or older members forming their own, tend to lower reported incomes per household, while failure to treat retained corporate earnings as stockholder income overstates incomes per household in the upper brackets, considering the decline in these earnings.)

In the absence of price controls, income equalization is inflationary because the increased money consumption demands raise the money incomes of upper-income recipients who own a disproportionate share of productive facilities. This in part vitiates the equalizing effort, requiring it to be intensified, and thus also further intensifying inflation. Hence, some form of control is required, and this spells "a firmer control over the price level than the wage level; that is, some control over the rate of return," so as "to avoid the antidistributional effects of rises in business incomes."[18] Thus, while efforts rapidly to equalize incomes are inflationary, efforts to subdue the resulting inflation are usually "anti-investment."

This argument represents a logically coherent rationalization for countering the alleged trend toward equalization of incomes embodied in the federal budget, and for measures that would improve the economic position of business, largely at the expense of "consumption." This argument is based on a highly selective and therefore fallacious view of the evidence that supposedly supports it. It has gained widespread acceptance and requires analysis from an adversary point of view.

One of the basic data for this argument is that equalization of incomes over the past decade has led to an inflationary consumer boom. First, the official figures do not indicate a significant change in the distribution of personal money incomes. The lowest 20 percent of the population received 5.2

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percent of total money incomes in 1965, and 5.4 percent in 1974; the highest 20 percent received 40.9 percent and 41 percent. The rate of increase in incomes, then, was roughly the same for all income quintiles, and no redistribution can be shown.[19] Second, and more important, however, is the fact that the *dollar difference* in actual money incomes between the lowest and the highest quintiles widened enormously in the two years—from $13,195 to $25,443. That is, families in the top fifth of the income distribution received $16,695 in 1965 and $31,943 in 1974; families in the bottom fifth received $3,500 and $6,500. True, the *relative* position of both quintiles remained unchanged; still, when the widening *dollar* difference is taken into account, the position of the bottom fifth deteriorated. A consumer-goods boom did occur, but it cannot possibly be attributed to income equalization.

This is also evidenced by a brief examination of the expansion in such programs as social security. The average monthly benefit of a retired worker rose to $188, or by about $100 between 1965 and 1974. After adjusting for the declining purchasing power of the dollar, it rose by little more than $50. True, because of the rise in the *total* number of benefits, and because of the higher monthly unit benefits paid out, the total amount of social security more than tripled over the decade. However, inasmuch as virtually all of the benefits are financed by payroll contributions, which rose at about the same pace, no new source of consumer outlays was created; there was merely a shift in spending power from the currently employed to retired workers. Hence, to associate the expansion of social security transfer payments with "inflation" is preposterous.

The claim that egalitarian policies or pressures led to the suppression of price increases sufficient to pass on cost increases, while allowing incomes full play by means of indexing them, is also problematical. The mandatory price controls instituted briefly by the Nixon administration ultimately failed because they could not accommodate wide variations in costs and pricing practices, and in productivity—a failure that resulted in large part of course from resistance and ideological ambivalence. The threat of renewed controls, after the original ones had been modified or abandoned in early 1973, spurred rather than restrained price increases (renewal would have to work with new, higher price ceilings). Regulatory rate setting has been taking higher costs generously into account, especially over the past two years. Rent controls have indeed spread but have in effect been neutralized in many instances by conversions to condominium or "cooperative" status, or by the decline of normal landlord services.

Those who argue that equalization policies have prevailed also ignore the fact that unemployment has been deliberately allowed to rise as a means to limit wage bargains, thus restraining consumption and prices. Nothing demonstrates the spuriousness of the "equalization" argument more strikingly. Moreover, the labor market positions of those who should presumably have benefited most from "equalization" has not materially changed: in 1975, the unemployment rate of black men 20-64 years old was nearly twice as high as that of their white counterparts, and the rate for adult women was one-fifth again as high as that for adult men. These relationships have not changed significantly over the past decade and do not manifest the pressures for "equalization" postulated by those arguing its case. Yet, there is some truth in this argument, although its proponents have overlooked it, a truth pertaining to a long-term development that stretches over perhaps the last 70 years. It is that the gradual, albeit incomplete integration of labor in the polity, particularly of organized labor, has tened to change the conditions of capital accumulation, i.e., the extraction of surplus value from labor. The economic consequences of labor's integration have been resisted at great social cost and with decreasing success. Among the forms this resistance has taken has been the pursuit of a relatively high unemployment rate as a key tool of economic policy. The rationale of the policy is that a large, unemployed labor supply will restrain wage bargains. But the resistance of organized labor has neutralized it to some extent.

The concept of an "unemployment-inflation" tradeoff, on which economic policy in the U.S. has been based throughout most of the post-World War II period, is anachronistic and unworkable and cannot restore the conditions of the mid-19th century to which it applied. High unemployment spells reduced demand, which today's mass production industries can ill afford. It affects regions and localities unevenly, undermining their social and economic structures. It causes the exodus of the more skilled and energetic workers, breaking up work teams that are hard to reassemble. It makes life difficult for the more highly capitalized industries (which pay comparatively high wages), since marginal firms in such industries are enabled to hire available unemployed labor at lower wages and can underbid the prices of the

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technologically more advanced firms. Therefore (and we have not exhausted the reasons), a policy that seeks to stabilize prices by means of unemployment cannot succeed; unemployment cannot be allowed to rise to levels that threaten the system (although one should not overestimate the control over the level of employment and unemployment that is possible within the terms of conventional policy).

The only direct way for capitalist industry to regain control over the conditions of surplus value extracted from labor is through administrative measures, possibly combined with a public employment program that pays a lower-than-standard wage rate and is mandatory for the unemployed who have exhausted their unemployment benefits. Such measures have been proposed by the chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, Arthur Burns.[20] But administrative measures over the wage bargain of any broad scope would spell either a basic change in current relations between labor and capital, implying fascistic tendencies or, in the absence of such a change, would impose such restrictions on prices nd profits (as well as wages) as to virtually nullify the possibility of intensified extraction of surplus value from labor. This latter alternative is the more probable, at least for the present.

Since the possibilities of extracting surplus value have become more limited, the almost forced and rapid expansion of credit has been resorted to as a supplement. In addition, the private appropriation of socially generated knowledge and inventions has come to be ever more closely exercised.[21] The limits of credit expansion, to some extent, have been discussed earlier. The limits of the commercial exploitation of knowledge and its applications, while greatly extended by multinational corporations and international patent and licensing agreements, are found chiefly in international competition, whose potency is enhanced by the participation of national governments. The rapidity with which these limits impose themselves need not be assessed here; they evolve as tendencies, not as sudden barriers. At any rate, the more they are perceived, the more the state comes under pressure to help generate the means toward larger capital formation, i.e., "corporate savings."

In this respect, the state's role is by now well entrenched. Federal expenditures, as for example for the purchase of military hard goods or the support of research and development, provide the basis for large-scale capital investments. Medicare has given rise to a profitable nursing home and hospital industry. In 1975, federal credit programs had $178 billion in outstanding direct loans, mostly to financial intermediaries for relending; new commitments amounted to $35 billion. But funds not tied to specific expenditure goals or financing objectives are needed, and one of the recently more widely discussed means for generating such funds is to run a budgetary surplus.[22]

A budgetary surplus would presumably be generated in conditions of "full" employment. It could then be used to pay off part of the public debt, conceivably making funds available for capital investment (although, again, the ultimate use of such funds would be beyond the control of the government). Alternatively, the government could use the surplus to buy stocks or bonds of private businesses, thus helping to finance them. But this alternative has not been mentioned by the proponents of a budgetary surplus.

To some, it would seem not to matter whether savings are generated in the public or the private sector of the economy. This is not so. Surpluses of great magnitude are envisioned in some studies, $82 billion in 1980 in one of them.[23] Taxes would necessarily have to grow much faster than expenditures. As earlier noted, a portion of the federal budget now constitutes a vehicle for private capital investment. Tax revenues in excess of budgeted expenditures would provide an additional source of capital accumulation. The function of the federal budget in redistributing income to those in need would be diminished; its function in redistributing resources to owners of capital would be enlarged.

It is improbable that significant, if any, federal surpluses will develop in the foreseeable future. In view of the enormous federal deficits in recent years and in prospect, the idea of enlarging the national pool of savings by deliberately creating surpluses seems chimerical; yet it should not therefore be dismissed. It expresses a sense of crisis among economists and others to whom the socialization of investment and the allocation of credit is anathema. The creation of a budget surplus, to be sure, represents a form of capital allocation, but the intent is to channel the available funds to a class, not to a social purpose and to benefit, established interests.

More likely than sizable federal budget surpluses is the continued liberalization of taxes on income from capital assets. This would raise the after-tax yield of assets and thus presumably spur capital formation, although this result has been disputed.[24] Whatever its impact on capital formation, the

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indicated liberalization of the tax code would benefit owners of capital.

We cannot detail the many kinds of favored tax treatment of capital assets and of income derived from them. Let us merely point to the steady decline in the effective tax rate paid by corporations on their income, which fell below 40 percent in 1974 for the first time in 25 years, and to 39.2 percent in 1975 (the nominal rate is 48 percent).[25] Still, major new kinds of tax relief for owners of capital assets have been proposed, e.g., the removal of the "double taxation" of dividends, which are currently taxed as profits at the corporate level, and as income at the shareholder level.

The rationale for taxing dividends twice is that corporations are, in effect, legal entities, separate from shareholders, with interests and responsibilities necessarily separate from and transcending those of shareholders. The arguments pro and con cannot be discussed here. Removal of the tax on dividends at the corporate level would increase dividend payouts (alternatively, it may take the form of a tax credit allowed to shareholders); the revenue loss to the Treasury has been estimated at $12 billion, which probably represents the gain to shareholders.[26] The income distribution would be substantially shifted in favor of owners of capital assets (which include stocks): in 1972, fewer than one-fifth of all tax returns accounted for close to three-fifths of all dividend income. The expectation that the additional dividends would be reinvested, i.e., that capital formation would be spurred, is merely conjecture.

IV

WE HAVE attacked the notion of "capital shortage" on the ground that it lacks a foundation in recent historical experience; that the rationale in its favor is fallacious; and that the proposals to overcome it, while benefiting owners of capital assets, carry no mandate that the benefits be reinvested. Furthermore, since the *direction* of capital investment would not be affected by any of the remedies proposed to overcome the "capital shortage," misdirection of such investment would not be avoided; the scourge of sharp and frequent cyclical swings in economic conditions would be exacerbated by the additional capital investments from the proposed incentives. Investment "errors" have tended to become larger, and less easily expungeable because of the financial stakes and employment involved (Lockheed, beneficiary of $195 million in government loan guarantees, employs 56,000 persons). The resources required to correct these "errors" by now are enormous, and they are to be supplemented by additional subsidies to owners of capital.

It is probable that there have been structural changes, which tend to limit the accumulation process—e.g., the social power of organized labor; the sharpening rivalries in the world economy; the vast expansion of debt with its threat to financial values; the growth of a class of unemployed, underemployed, and unemployable persons requiring rising maintenance expenditures. But these are problems with which the remedies discussed here cannot cope. The "capital shortage" is a myth, but like all myths it carries a weighty message: it represents a demand upon the state to reduce its compensatory social outlays and to aid private accumulation. It must be regarded as a harbinger of a more pervasive state capitalism, a threat to social gains. The analysis offered here is meant as a weapon to combat the myth and its probable consequences. □

Notes

[1]U.S. Senate, Committee on Finance, *Capital Requirements of Energy Independence.* Joint Hearings before the Subcommittee on Energy and the Subcommittee on Financial Markets (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office [hereafter, in following notes, G.P.O.], May 7 and 8, 1975), p. 29.

[2]Joint Committee on Internal Revenue Taxation, *Capital Formation.* Prepared for the use of the Committee on Ways and Means (Washington, D.C.: Oct. 7, 1975), p. 36.

[3]*Statement,* William E. Simon, Secretary of the Treasury, before the House Ways and Means Committee, Jan. 22, 1975 (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O.), p. 14.

[4]*Capital Requirements of Energy Independence,* p. 33.

[5]"The data do not describe an economy subsiding into stagnation over the last decade; in fact, the real growth of plant and equipment outlay has been faster since 1965 than it was the preceding twelve years, and the rate of growth in physical output has been about as well maintained." Albert T. Sommers with Lucie R. Blau, *The Widening Cycle: An Examination of U.S. Experience with Stabilization Policy in the Last Decade* (New York: *The Conference Board,* 1975), p. 34.

[6]Simon Kuznets, *Capital in the American Economy.* A Study of the National Bureau of Economic Research (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), p. 396.

[7]Richard Musgrave, in Public Hearings before the Committee on Ways and Means, quoted in *Capital Formation,* p. 35.

[8]Banks have refused to make mortgage loans on dwellings in rundown or racially "unstable" neighborhoods on the ground that "they cannot risk their depositors' money by making bad loans," *Business Week,* March 22, 1976, p. 143, reporting on a federal court decision on the "redlining" of neighborhoods. However, banks have lent millions of dollars to real estate investment trusts ("REITS") many of whom either would now be bankrupt

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but for their bank sponsors' forebearance or compelled to file for bankruptcy when forbearance was withdrawn,

[9]Arnold Diamond, *Credit Flows and Interests Cost.* A Study Prepared for the Subcommittee on Economic Progress of the Joint Economic Committee, U.S. Congress (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O., March 17, 1975), p. 28.

[10]*Ibid.*, p. 32.

[11]*Ibid.*, p. 35.

[12]For much valuable detail in a brief compass, see "What's Wrong with The Mortgage Market," *Business Week,* Oct. 12, 1974, pp. 86 ff.

[13]"Deficits appear to be largely and ever more quickly absorbed into corporate surpluses. Part of this is intended; it derives from tax cuts and higher investment allowances. Even more, it derives from the price system, which acts as a transfer system to benefit those whose power to raise prices is unrestricted." V. Lewis Bassie, "Fiscal Policy Without Controls," *Illinois Business Review,* Dec. 1975, p. 2.

[14]Albert T. Sommers, "Social Goals and Economic Growth—the Policy Problem in Capital Formation," *The Conference Board Record,* Dec. 1975, p. 18.

[15]*Ibid.*, p. 19.

[16]*Ibid.*

[17]*Ibid.*, p. 20. The evidence for "declining vigor" of profits in recent business cycle expansions is less than convincing. Corporate capital consumption allowances plus after-tax profits—i.e., cash flow or gross profits—accounted for 17.8 percent of the domestic product of non-financial corporations in 1974, and 16.2 percent in 1973. These ratios compare with 15.3 in 1965 and 1968; and 18.9 and 18.3 in 1955 and 1956, years of strong expansion.

[18]*Ibid.*, pp. 23, 24.

[19]*Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1975* (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O. 1975), tables 636 and 637. The income figures cited in the text refer to the upper limit for the lowest quintile, and to the lower limit for the top 5 percent of the income distribution.

[20]"The Real Issues of Inflation and Unemployment," *Address* by Arthur F. Burns, Chairman, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System at the Blue Key Honor Society Annual Awards Dinner, (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia, Sept. 19, 1975).

[21]For an informative statement, see Robert F. Lanzillotti in U.S. Senate, Select Committee on Small Business, *Economic Aspects of Government Patent Policies* (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O., March 8, 1963), pp. 117 ff.

[22]See Barry Bosworth et al., *Capital Needs in the Seventies* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1975). See also the statement of James J. Needham, Chairman, N.Y. Stock Exchange, in U.S. Senate Committee on the Budget, *Effects of Fiscal and Monetary Policies on Capital Formation and Economic Growth* (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O., 1975), p. 113.

[23]See *Capital Needs in the Seventies,* p. 32, tables 2-9.

[24]See *Capital Formation, p. 35.*

[25]Joint Economic Committee, U.S. Congress, *The 1976 Joint Economic Report* (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O., March 1976), p. 169.

[26]*Capital Formation,* p. 51.

George Eckstein

Softened Voices in The Black Theater

During the late 1960s and early '70s the black theater in America showed a certain vigor and eloquence. A new radical consciousness was struggling for expression, and though many of these youthful voices were stronger in intent than content, some genuine, talented dramatists and vivid performers were developing in those years (see "The New Black Theater," *Dissent*, Winter 1973).

That time of high drama and visions of revolution, cultural autonomy and attempts to revive an African heritage has become a thing of the past. The black community now has entered a rocky period of readjustment, of malign neglect by a cynical national leadership—but also of at least partial consolidation of the economic, social, and political gains of the 1960s. Both the neglect and the advances created new areas and types of conflict (soon to be exacerbated by a deep recession), notably through the spread of an increasingly hopeless urban underclass—and, also, through the simultaneous growth of a new black middle class: college-bred, working in public service, the academy, communications, even the corporate sector.

Together with the "radical" black political groups, much of the new black theater fell by the wayside: many of the playwrights had spent their ardor; their pamphlet plays, street theater, and Afro-cult were short-lived. Local black theater groups were reduced in scope and means. Some disappeared altogether, most notably Robert Macbeth's and Ed Bullins's New Lafayette Theatre and their magazine *Black Theater*. Some, like Barbara Ann Teer's National Black Theatre, subsisted in Harlem as a sectarian cult. For a while, the street theater in New York seemed to be taken over by Puerto Rican theater groups, and in Manuel Piñero they produced a writer of talent. His shocking prison drama *Short Eyes*, born of his own prison experience and acted by a group of exconvicts, was very impressive off-Broadway, but did not thrive on the oversized stage of Lincoln Center's Beaumont Theater.

The only black theater group in New York to survive with undiminished vigor was the oldest and least "radical," the Negro Ensemble Company. The company owes its survival in part to the strong personality of its leader, the actor-playwright-director Douglas Turner Ward, a true and dynamic, if

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somewhat hammy, man of the theater. It is significant that he held on to the "Negro" in the name of his company. A recent interview quotes him:

> I guess that name just shows my stubbornness. The word "Negro" has a long, honored history. I like "black"—it makes a positive statement about what we are—but I loathed the posturing and attitudinizing that went with the total put-down of the word "Negro"!

It helped his company and acting school that he was able to retain much of his financial backing, notably from the Ford Foundation, at a time when grants were severely cut. And the tenor of the plays Ward produced reflected indeed the changing mood of the black community, including its radicalization. (His audience had gradually changed over the years from predominantly white to predominantly black.) He always seemed to keep close to the mainstream of black thought in the choice of his material, and he maintained a respectable level of competence in acting and direction.

The demise of a separate black theater, as that of separatist politics, was also hastened by "co-optation," the growing opportunities within the "Establishment." More and more black plays were cultivated in the general, "white" theater, notably by the American Place Theatre, the Chelsea Theatre Group, and in Joseph Papp's widening theater empire. Papp also produced Shakespeare adaptations (e.g., *Two Gentlemen of Verona*) with a black cast. Still, the financial rewards remained modest. Unfortunately, the white audience for black plays has remained rather limited. By now, however, the new educated young and relatively affluent black middle class has formed a substantial black audience nucleus for the black theater.

The black theater has changed during recent years.

There is, first, the switch from romantic revolution to romantic violence. This has been most noticeable in the Blaxploitation films (*Shaft*, etc.). Black Power, physical and sexual, is now exercised over nasty white gangsters by the black outsider or cop, with a thin Hollywood veneer of moral rectitude, justified no longer by the higher law of revolution but by some sort of "law and order." Vicarious gratification is provided for a young black ghetto audience getting back at Whitey.

Next, there are the soap-opera types of black theater. One of these is the Broadway musical—such as *Wiz*, the black *Wizard of Oz*, or *Raisin*, the musical version of Lorraine Hansberry's *Raisin in the Sun*—both praised by white critics and popular with black audiences.

Another, perhaps more significant version is the "quality" film or TV drama—*Sounder* and *Jane Pittman*, both written by Lonnie Elder III, whose earlier play *Ceremonies in Dark Old Men* is a stark Harlem tragedy. Elder's Hollywood work is essentially a return to the old sharecropper South, a celebration of the Negro's endurance, ultimate assertion, and self-respect under adverse circumstances. One might think this sort of approach would have limited meaning for big-city youth, but a young black whom I asked about *Sounder* felt elated by the film's lesson that "you shouldn't give up despite difficulties." His reaction may or may not be representative, but I wonder whether we have not become too sophisticated and/or cynical to appreciate the deep need for a moral satisfaction derived from maintaining one's integrity in adversity—an attitude perhaps still far more prevalent in the black community than the much more talked about spirit of "rip-off."

II

AMONG THE NEWER BLACK PLAYS there is a discernible trend to fall back on old virtues—honesty, self-respect, family solidarity, caring. Philip Hayes Dean's *Freeman*, for example, set in a Midwestern industrial city, confronts an impatient half-educated son, anxious to "make it fast" through a series of high-flying rip-off projects, with his Southern-born parents—a practical nurse and her husband who, in decades of hard work in a metal forge, has achieved a stable existence while destroying his health on the job. A second, adopted son has become a successful smooth doctor-politician-operator. "Free"man ends up corrupted and destroyed by his unrealistic ambition, saved from a worse fate by commitment to a psychiatric ward—and in the process tears his parents' world down with him.

In Joseph Walker's *River Niger*, the imposing father, symbolized in the title, has had his literary ambitions shattered. Trapped by the needs of his family, he becomes a house painter—escaping his fate periodically in an alcoholic binge. He has transferred his ambitions on to his son's career in the Navy, but these collapse when the son, unwilling to endure racial degradations, throws up his chance to become an officer. Instead he plans to study law in order to serve his people, having recognized the futility of the revolutionary games of his former pals. Their group involves him, much against his wish, one last time in a foredoomed coup during which, in a last sacrificial gesture, the old man finds both his lost greatness and his destruction.

With *First Breeze of Summer* a new black author, Leslie Lee, entered the New York stage in 1975,

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first at the Negro Ensemble Company, then on Broadway. Lee, one of nine children of a black family in a small Pennsylvania town (but college-educated and supported by grants in his dramatic efforts), brings us into the world of small-town respectability and family cohesion. Here the family head is a small painting contractor, solid but underpaid, and a paradigm of middle-class virtues. His older son has joined him out of filial duty, sacrificing his own plans for a teaching career. But the two key poles of the play are an old devout grandmother revered by all, and her favorite grandchild, the rebellious younger son, a teenager searching for identity. He strains to get away from confinement in blackness, on to college and higher things. The dramatic climax comes in a deathbed scene between grandmother and grandson: she reveals to him her own youthful escapades and failures (previously sketched out in interspersed brief scenes), and forces him to realize that, try as he may, he cannot escape his black origins and can only hope to rise *with* his black brothers, not against them.

Thus different authors, in different locales, through changing generations and milieus, reveal the enduring core of the black condition. In the '60s there was, for a brief moment, the hope of breaking out of it—first the ecstatic hope of black/white solidarity in the civil rights movement, then the desperate hope of Black Power and militant self-assertion.

III

IN the black theater, Ed Bullins was Black Power's foremost and most articulate representative. Between 1965 and 1970 he created a score of highly dramatic plays—from the very personal and touching *A Son, Come Home* to the powerful *In the Wine Time*, *Goin A'Buffalo*, *Duplex*, and *In New England Winter*. Then there was silence, an occasional rehash of old characters and situations, and some embarrassing outbursts of egomania.

Not until winter 1974 did Bullins reenter the New York stage with a new play, first mounted by Woodie King, Jr., at the Henry Street Playhouse, then transferred to Joseph Papp's now defunct experimental stage at Lincoln Center. *The Taking of Miss Janie* is an ambitious work. It attempts no less than to draw the balance sheet of the turbulent '60s, and with almost sadistic (and perhaps masochistic) pleasure Bullins records the failures of those who had set out with high hope and purpose. In his own words, "the theme of the play is the destruction of illusion." Its characters are a group of young people, black and white students at a California college, a musician, an agitator. The central figures are Monty, student/poet and somewhat autobiographical, and his white fellow-student Janie, full of ignorant goodwill and eager to befriend him in a rather platonic way. He is attracted by her, yet feels he is "kept as a pet slave" (hence the insulting address "Miss Janie"). The years of growing frustration build up toward the rape that frames the play, Bullins's symbol for the relation between the races. Around the central conflict between Monty and Janie—she gradually getting ready to surrender, he biding his time for the brutal "taking"—Bullins develops the path of the other characters: Janie's boyfriend, the lowly token white guy in a black jazz band, winds up in a Buddhist group. A Jewish nymphomaniac ends as the obedient wife of a dominating black, pushing her black baby through the supermarket. Her cynical husband makes it from slick radical intellectual to successful businessman. An older black man who had started as Marxist, complete with a white woman, goes all the way to become a fervent Black Muslim preaching against the White Devil. One of the more complex characters is a Jewish anarchist beat-poet-become-addict, abjectly begging for a fix, at last taunting the black former friend into murderous rage: "We too marched in Alabama. We too were killed in Mississippi. You can't do without us, you can't even do without our Jesus." A black co-ed, for a while "Macho" Monty's woman and carrying his child, lands—after drugs, Lesbos, liquor—in the feminist movement. But her lament speaks for a whole generation: "We were into America. We thought we could make it over. We all failed, failed ourselves in the sixties. in the test of times. We blew it. We are nothing but a bunch of freaks, of fuck-offs."

A harsh and bitter judgment indeed, coming from within. Bullins may not have fully succeeded in dramatic terms, yet that does not diminish his achievement. Compared to his portrayal of black/white youth experience of the '60s, the few attempts by white playwrights (e.g., Michael Waller) remain insipid and superficial.

The black rebels of the '60s, like their white counterparts, have in one way or another learned to live within "the system." This does not mean ceasing to be social critics or to work toward major changes in the way men and women, blacks and whites, live. It does mean an end to the posturing and violence-mongering that flourished a few years ago. The complexities of this process, which might be called "cold integration," and the conflicts it is likely to produce among the people exposed to it, ought to provide a great deal of rich material for black dramatists in the coming years. □

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Ronald Radosh

On the Cuban Revolution

REVOLUTION IN CUBA: AN ESSAY IN UNDERSTANDING, by Herbert L. Matthews. New York: Scribner's. 468 pp. $15.00.

CUBA IN THE 1970s: PRAGMATISM AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION, by Carmelo Mesa-Lago. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. 179 pp. $3.95 (paper).

WITH FIDEL: A PORTRAIT OF CASTRO, by Frank Mankiewicz and Kirby Jones. Chicago: Playboy Press. 369 pp. $10.95.

CUBA YES?, by David Caute. New York: McGraw Hill. 207 pp. $7.95.

THE RISE AND DECLINE OF FIDEL CASTRO: AN ESSAY IN CONTEMPORARY HISTORY, by Maurice Halperin. Berkeley: University of California Press. 380 pp. $12.95.

For much of the past year—before Cuba's recent African involvement—it seemed that relations between the United States and Cuba were proceeding toward normalization. This trend was complemented by a spate of new books about the Cuban Revolution, books whose authors seek to make that Revolution acceptable to North Americans in terms Fidel Castro surely would approve of. Into this group fall Herbert L. Matthews' recent study and the text of a lengthy interview with *el jefe* himself by Frank Mankiewicz and Kirby Jones.

The publication of these books indeed coincides with the efforts by some State Department realists, liberal senators, and congresspeople to change United States policy toward Cuba. But if a *modus vivendi* with Cuba is to be accepted by the American public, which has been inundated for years with distorted coverage of the Revolution's achievements, a new image will have to be provided. While anti-Castro liberals used to depict Cuba as a dangerous Soviet beachhead, some writers now describe the country in terms similar to the rather uncritical reports that came from the Revolution's most faithful supporters during the 1960s.

The Revolution's friends have always stressed Cuba's achievements in education, literacy, health care, and housing—achievements denied or ignored by the pundits of official liberalism. These friends and supporters often traveled to Cuba as guests of the Cuban government. Their close partisan identification with the Revolution and their position as honored *invitados* invariably led to a defusion of all criticism; they traveled of course subject to an itinerary that served to feed the illusions of the radical tourist.[1]

Now not merely veterans of the Old and the New Left come forth with such reports. Frank Mankiewicz, former Peace Corps director for Latin-American projects, and his associate Kirby Jones provide numerous examples of unadul-

[1]For an elaboration of this argument, see Hans Magnus Enzensberger's important essay, "Tourists of the Revolution," in *The Consciousness Industry* (New York: Seabury Press, 1974), pp. 129-57. For an example of early romantic reports on Cuba, see Sandra Levinson and Carol Brightman, eds., *Venceremos Brigade: Young Americans Sharing the Life and Work of Revolutionary Cuba* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971).

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terated enthusiasm for Fidel Castro's charisma, as well as some naive and at times ignorant statements about the politics of the Cuban Revolution. Herbert Matthews, who knows a great deal more about Cuba's political ups and downs, offers a complete history of the Cuban Revolution—one he hopes, he tells us, does not seem to be written from the outside.

The problem with the Matthews volume is precisely that it is not written from the outside. Matthews constantly seeks to provide rationales for Cuba's chosen course. He defines himself as a liberal journalist, an American who never saw a need to concern himself with socialism. Yet Matthews not only finds the "Marxist-Leninist Cuban Revolution" entirely beneficial, he also does not shy away from a universal generalization about socialist development. "Socialism in the twentieth century," he writes, "has to be imposed from above, as it was in Cuba. There is no such thing as a spontaneous, grassroots Marxist socialism suddenly infusing a complete society. . . . The only possible method [for Cuba] was a form of authoritarianism," which developed into Marxism-Leninism.[2] Since Matthews proceeds to argue that this authoritarianism is to be credited for massive benefits in the social sphere, he feels he does not have to venture a candid assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of Cuba's political structure.

Other recent books, which have received less attention, allow North Americans to take a less apologetic look at Cuba. British historian David Caute provides a humorous but tough-minded account of his 1972 tour with a group of Europeans. Maurice Halperin, an American political scientist who taught for five years at the University of Havana, offers both a first-hand account and an analysis of Cuban-Soviet relations. The most important of the recent books is the study by Carmelo Mesa-Lago, director of the Center for Latin-American Studies at the University of Pittsburgh. Mesa-Lago has produced a careful, sober, and scholarly picture of the Revolution's institutionalization. A Cuban refugee who hopes that the paths of the new Cuban generations inside and outside Cuba "will converge in the future," Mesa-Lago provides his work with the balance that is lacking in Matthews' book.

TODAY'S CUBA is a country of paradoxes. The average Cuban sees Fidel Castro as his *compañero*, and this citizen is embued with a spirit of solidarity for the Revolution and with pride in how much has been accomplished after years of effort. Yet power remains centered in a small group—at first, the original band of guerrillas who fought with Fidel Castro in the Sierra Maestra, and more recently the leadership of Cuba's Communist party.

Since 1970, Cuba has gone deeply into debt to the Soviet Union. There was the failure of the plan to harvest 10 million tons of sugar—which, had it succeeded, would have given Cuba a surplus that would have reduced its debt to Russia. That failure, however, made Cuba even more dependent upon Soviet goodwill. The trade agreement of 1973 provided Soviet help in solving Cuba's balance-of-payments dilemma. Payment of Cuba's debt to Russia, which accrued between 1960 and 1972, was deferred until 1986; the payments were to be made over a 25-year period beginning in 1986. In the period of 1973-75 alone, Cuba received 300 million rubles worth of technical aid, and, in this same two-year period, the Soviet Union agreed to pay higher prices for Cuba's two major export items—sugar and nickel.

The new Soviet aid was offered on condition that Castro stop experimenting with the Sino-Guevarist economic program, which had been based on "growth through consciousness": labor mobilization, egalitarianism, use of moral incentives, and the attempt to achieve a gigantic sugar harvest. That program had failed to reach its high economic targets; instead, it had produced low-labor productivity, gross mismanagement, and indeed the dislocation of the entire economy.

In exchange for renewed Soviet aid, the Castro leadership agreed to transform Cuba into a society based on the Soviet model. Castro relinquished some power to the old-line, trusted Communist Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, a man who had always advocated a more conventional Soviet course of economic development. More delegation of power to Moscow-oriented old Communists now is clearly under way and evident after the convening of the long-delayed first congress of Cuba's Communist party. The era when all the top positions in the Administration, the Communist party, and the Army are held by Fidel Castro and his original guerrilla band may now be coming to an end. The new institutionalization means greater central coordination in government, the revitalization of the Communist party, and the introduction of rank and hierarchy into a new, professional

[2] *Revolution in Cuba*, pp. 219-20.

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army. This may result in increased productivity and greater economic stability. But, on many levels, the Revolution's institutionalization is producing a type of society that is far less appealing than that of the early years. Carmelo Mesa-Lago succinctly describes these changes:

> The romanticism of the 1960s has apparently come to an end. . . . Today Cuba is busily working out trade, diplomatic, and anti-hijacking agreements with as many Latin-American countries as possible. The appealing, quixotic attempt to skip the transitional phase of socialism and rapidly create a "New Man" in an egalitarian communistic society through the development of consciousness, the use of moral incentives, and labor mobilization has been quietly halted. The talk of the day in Cuba is economic incentives, wage differentials, and building the material base through the use of cost-benefit analysis and raising capital efficiency and labor productivity. The uniqueness of the Cuban Revolution, so much praised in the past by Sartre, has gradually dulled and the more conventional features of socialism "à la Eastern Europe" appear increasingly stronger on the island.[3]

IN THE ECONOMIC SPHERE, Cuba has introduced the once abandoned and discredited use of material incentives, including production bonuses, pay for overtime, and wage differentials—all meant to create a sustained balance between labor expended and productivity. Wages are determined according to the fulfillment of quotas set by the planning board, and scarce and desired consumer goods (TV sets, washing machines, pressure cookers, watches, etc.) are to be awarded to workers who have successfully increased their productivity.

Earlier critics of Cuba's economic policy during the Sino-Guevarist period, such as French agronomist René Dumont, had assumed that the political corollary of material incentives would be a "certain amount of liberalization," combined with the formation of small work collectives to be run by the workers themselves—thereby creating a decentralized socialist apparatus that would allow for the accommodation of public criticism.[4]

The new economic course, in fact, is related to a return to what Mesa-Lago terms the postreform Soviet system. New life has been pumped into the Cuban Federation of Labor (CTC), which had almost disappeared during the period of "voluntary" labor mobilizations, when "vanguard workers" determined labor policy. Now the CTC functions much like its Soviet counterpart—enforcing work discipline, helping to increase productivity, and arranging vacations and social events.

The role of the unions was explained to me in Havana's old Partagas cigar factory, which still occupies the same building where past generations rolled cigars in 1845. The plant's manager says that new norms for increased production have been introduced in order to fill the great foreign demand for Cuban cigars. What if the workers feel the plan is not realistic, I ask, and the new goals are too high? "We have three choices," he answers. "Either we hire new workers if they are available; or we work all day Saturday instead of half a day; or we increase the daily work hours." It was clear that this plant manager felt the only subject the workers were permitted to discuss was *how* the norms were to be implemented.

Such attitudes lead David Caute to ask whether Cuba has in fact introduced socialism at all. How, Caute asks, can the Cubans "talk of socialism when there is no collective decision-making?" While touring a sugar exporting plant in Cienfuegos, Caute receives the usual answer that emphasizes the extent of worker participation. But he persists in asking whether peasants "really administer their own co-operatives, or the workers their own factories." His Cuban host is dismayed by such questions. It is not surprising to find that the plant manager calls the tour to a halt, after Caute boldly proclaims:

> The only point I want to make is this: a nationalized economy, like Cuba's, is not a worker's economy. Managers and administrators, like yourself, make all the crucial decisions; you mobilize labor, direct labor, discipline labor, and all the time you tell the workers that this silo belongs to them. You have a machinery for the ventilation of certain minor grievances, but that is all. You make absolutely sure that the trade unions can never challenge your power, your authority, but on the contrary, act as transmission belts for your directives.[5]

The Revolution's economic policy has changed; but the new institutionalization has not led the Cubans to face the problem pointed out earlier by K.S. Karol. Although Karol was sympathetic to the position of Che Guevara, he argued that neither Che nor his opponents during the 1963-65

[3] *Cuba in the 1970s*, p.x.

[4] Rene Dumont, *Is Cuba Socialist?* (New York: Viking Press, 1974), p. 130.

[5] *Cuba Yes?*, pp. 102, 68.

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economic debates had "come to grips with the problem of political power in, and the political organization of, all those societies where centralized reformist experiments in planning and economic management were taking place." Che failed to discuss the issue of "direct participation of all the workers . . . in the running of communal affairs." He could have argued that unions had to function as autonomous institutions expressing and defending the interests of the working class. Yet even Che preferred "to take shelter behind two myths, both of them imported from the USSR": that workers had no other interest "than the acceleration of production in accordance with the overall economic plan," and that the revolutionary leaders "know best how to interpret the thoughts and needs of the working class." In Cuba, as in other socialist societies, Karol noted, "socialist democracy is not the kind of luxury people can only afford when everything else has been settled."[6]

THERE MAY NO LONGER be the brand of authoritarianism in Cuba that emanates from the militarization of labor, with bureaucrats exerting themselves to gain compliance through "voluntary" labor mobilization that is organized along military lines. But today still Cuba is a country where all political power is held by the leadership of the Communist party. Cuba's ideological rigidity and lack of open political discussion is most evident to foreign visitors when they open their morning edition of *Granma*, the paper Caute accurately calls "one long government press conference," a "casserole of slogans and exhortations," which prints the news in a propaganda framework that of course presents only one side of any argument.[7]

Fidel Castro tries to explain that there is no need for a "press that is against the revolutionary class." Why permit counterrevolutionary groups to publish articles aimed at the destruction of the Revolution? This explanation receives no firm retort from Mankiewicz and Jones, who even add the rationale that "if one compares Cuba's lack of political freedom and social mobility to any other Latin-American country, then to all but a handful of landed aristocrats it must seem a very desirable place indeed."[8]

In the early years of the Revolution, readers had a wider choice of printed opinion. The Fidelistas printed *Revolución*, the Communists published *Hoy*, cultural affairs were freely debated in *Lunes de Revolución* and theoretical issues in *Cuba Socialista*. Now, only *Granma* remains, voicing the government position on all matters. Why were the other papers phased out? Mankiewicz and Jones, who state categorically that "there has been no consistent Communist line, no ideological 'turns' to fit sudden and unexpected developments in the Soviet Union," would be surprised to learn that the demise of *Revolución*, and the very creation of *Granma*, had to do with Soviet dissatisfaction with Juan Arcocha's critical reportage on Soviet society in *Revolución* during Castro's trip to the U.S.S.R. in 1963. Arcocha's reports, Maurice Halperin writes, "exposed some of the bleak reality of political life in the Soviet Union."[9]

How one wishes that instead of presenting a Polaroid SX-70 to Fidel Castro, Mankiewicz and Jones had brought him a copy of Roy A. Medvedev's *On Socialist Democracy*. Any suggestion that Medvedev's critique of Soviet society could be applicable to Cuba, I am sure, would receive only scorn from these new friends of the Cuban Revolution. Yet Medvedev's argument against those he terms "conservatives" in the U.S.S.R. applies equally to Fidel Castro and the explanations he offers. Like the East European bureaucrats whose personal style Castro eschews, the Cuban leader equates opposition with counterrevolution. He does not acknowledge that opposition can exist within the framework of a socialist ideology that is acceptable to both the majority and the minority. Medvedev argues that the sum total of bourgeois democracy is not something to be discarded after social revolution, but a process to be extended and given new and richer content. The real issue, Medvedev contends, is not that of freedom for counterrevolutionaries but the right of a minority within a socialist society to argue for its viewpoint. It is not a question of rights for the former exploiting classes (which is how Castro states the case) but of rights for "differing tendencies and attitudes within the working classes itself, among the masses."[10]

[6]K. S. Karol, *Guerrillas in Power* (New York: Hill and Wang; 1970); pp. 329-30, 459.

[7]*Cuba Yes?*, pp. 73-74.

[8]*With Fidel*, pp. 94, 236-37.

[9]*Ibid.*, p. 224; *The Rise and Decline of Fidel Castro*, pp. 250-51.

[10]Roy A. Medvedev, *On Socialist Democracy* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1975), p. 44.

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Fidel Castro does not acknowledge such tendencies. Once it was the "microfaction" of Anibal Escalante and his followers who were condemned; now it is the remnant of the followers of Che Guevara. In each case, Fidel acts as the noble *jefe maximo*, who goes about the island exhorting his children on the need to understand the wisdom of the new Cuban policy. Of course, Fidel and his leadership believe that they alone see the correct path and actions to be taken. While many recent admirers of Castro see his movement throughout Cuba as an example of truly direct and democratic leadership, what David Caute states is more likely the truth: that Castro stands in the way of creating truly representative institutions.

THE CUBAN REVOLUTION abides no longer by Fidel Castro's 1961 pronouncement, guaranteeing a place for nonrevolutionary writers and artists. "Within the Revolution, everything," Castro then said; "against the Revolution, nothing." The limit of what he considers to be "within the Revolution" has now substantially diminished. Writers have to prove their militancy by producing overtly political works. New and rigorous forms of ideological control have been introduced. Cuban cultural policy, Halperin accurately writes, is now "fundamentally indistinguishable from the neo-Stalinist obscurantism that still guided official cultural policy in Moscow or the cruder version that prevailed in Peking."[11]

One indication of that policy is the Cuban government's decision to suspend publication of *Pensamiento Critico*, a journal published by the Philosophy Department at the University of Havana and run by a group of scholars sympathetic to Guevara's critique of Soviet economic policy. The journal printed material unavailable elsewhere on the island. An issue might contain a resolution of the Chinese Communist party's Central Committee, a statement by Yugoslav Marxists, excerpts from the works of Georg Lukács or Karl Korsch, contemporary writings by Regis Debray, as well as pieces by a "plain" Marxist such as Paul M. Sweezy, or even an article by Eldridge Cleaver, who by then had long been disillusioned with Castro's Cuba.

Frank McDonald, a North American who was teaching Caribbean Studies at the University of Havana, reports that the rector of the University told the staff that *Pensamiento* "was attracting too much attention and the positions taken by the faculty members reflected on the Revolution itself." Not only was the journal closed down; the faculty of the Philosophy Department was broken up. The director was assigned to a non-functioning university television station; one editor was summarily dismissed from his post, another transferred to Cuba's cinematography unit, and even Minister of Education and Culture José Llanusa was dismissed and put in charge of a pig farm in Camaguey. All this, McDonald concludes, "was only part of a larger crackdown on intellectuals throughout various departments of the University as well as numerous cultural organizations."[12]

A rationale for Cuba's cultural policy was given to this writer during the summer of 1973 by Roberto Fernández Retamar, editor of Cuba's literary journal, *Casa de las Americas*. Intellectuals, he argued, can no longer be considered a group that has the right to stand apart from the people and to separate themselves from the task of building the Revolution. Since "petty-bourgeois" writers like Heberto Padilla had been deprived of any economic path to advancement, Retamar claimed, he and his type tried to express their sentiments through literature. A few years ago Retamar had led the opposition to what he then called the "mechanical" attempt to impose the style of Soviet "socialist realism" on Cuban artists. Events had forced him, he told us, to reconsider his earlier position. Under socialism, the artist's sole responsibility is to aid the Revolution. In an essay he wrote elaborating on these themes, Retamar argued that Cuba had become part of a community of socialist nations and had inherited a tradition full of achievements as well as of errors. The problem, he said, was that Cuba's friends were calling attention only to its errors. What these Western and colonized Latin-American intellectuals actually objected to, he claimed, was the very existence of socialism.[13]

But the intellectuals who criticized the arrest and

[11] *The Rise and Decline of Fidel Castro*, p. 360.

[12] Frank McDonald, "Report from a Cuban Prison," Report no. 41, Aug. 10, 1973 (New York: Institute of Current World Affairs). McDonald had been teaching in Cuba for one year. Suddenly, on Christmas Eve 1971, he was arrested as a spy, held incommunicado for three months, and interrogated by state security officials. He was released for "lack of evidence," and sent directly to the airport to board a plane bound for the United States.

[13] Roberto Fernandez Retamar, "Caliban: Notes Towards a Discussion of Culture in our America," *The Massachusetts Review*, Winter-Spring 1974, pp. 66-67. The article appeared originally in *Casa de las Americas*, Sept.-Oct. 1971.

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"confession" of Heberto Padilla in fact were identified with and supporters of the Revolution—though fearful it might slip into the Soviet path.

One would hope that a journalist such as Herbert Matthews would provide a critical account of Cuban cultural policy and the Padilla episode. Instead, Matthews comes to the rescue of Cuba's neo-Stalinists. He does admit to what he calls a "clumsy handling" of Padilla, but he concludes that the Western intellectuals "struck out blindly, in haste . . . with insufficient knowledge of the case and of Fidel Castro and his revolution."[14]

Matthews' defense of the Cuban policy is at best sophomoric. He tells us that, according to one Cuban leader, Padilla "was not arrested because he was a writer, but because of his activities against the Revolution." Matthews does not inform his readers of the nature of Padilla's offenses. He even tells us that he agrees with a statement in the poet's confession, in which Padilla says that his blows against the Revolution would increase his popularity with so-called liberals in the United States.[15] Matthews even resorts to the fallacious argument that cultural freedom is of concern only to intellectuals, since wages, working conditions, and social services are not touched by their work, but are provided by the revolutionary government. Matthews would do well to reread what he calls the "emotionally hostile" article by José Yglesias, who pointed out that recalcitrant artists and the people are not really separate, that to silence one group indicates the Cuban leadership was not listening to the other.[16]

THESE SUPPORTERS of the Cuban Revolution seem to feel that they must conclude with an optimistic prognosis, and so they all point to the experimental elections held in Matanzas province in 1974 as proof that institutionalization is leading to new forms of mass democracy. Matthews dubs the new Organs of People's Power "an experiment in genuine democracy," while Mankiewicz and Jones refer to the Matanzas election as the "first, unrigged, unbought election ever, whether before or after the Revolution."[17]

Were these elections for municipal, regional, and provincial assemblies proof that Cuba had finally created democratic institutions? Anyone familiar with the claims made by the Cubans should know that it is wise to reserve judgment lest the latest heralded mechanism of mass democracy goes the way of previously praised but soon abandoned projects (i.e., the Communist youth encampment on the Isle of Pines). Only Mesa-Lago suggests that one should wait and see. He also notes that the Organs of People's Power are to be guided by a Commission that is to regulate and conduct the elections. The first Commission established to guide the Matanzas operation was chaired by the veteran Cuban Communist leader Blas Roca. Basing his commentary on Cuban sources, Mesa-Lago writes that the Communist party is given the responsibility of guiding the OPPs, which the Cuban government has fashioned in the image of the Soviet Union's local soviets.[18]

The other institutions said to signify proof of mass democracy are the Committees for Defense of the Revolution, or CDRs, formed in 1960 to combat counterrevolutionary activities. The CDRs soon were transformed into a mass institution that implements the government's policies on a block-by-block basis. This mass organization of 4 million members, with offices on every block, functions, as Matthews puts it, by getting every able bodied Cuban actively involved in "watching, helping, praising, or admonishing everybody else." One recent report noted that militants check each Havana apartment at night, to see that tenants are not wasting electricity. Perhaps the CDRs are not quite the institutions of "police inquisition" denying the poorest worker his dignity, as René Dumont suggests—but they certainly are not, as Matthews argues, organs of a "grassroots concensus" that represent "surely some kind of democracy."[19]

This writer had the opportunity to witness what might have been a typical CDR event. On a hot August evening in 1973, the streets of the Vedado district in downtown Havana were packed to capacity, as the local CDRs brought out the inhabitants of every apartment within a certain radius. The residents of each building were grouped in their own circle, and they sat for hours listening to lectures on topics ranging from fire-fighting instructions to the need for increased

[14] *Revolution in Cuba*, p. 327.

[15] *Ibid*, p. 332.

[16] José Yglesias, "A Cuban Poet in Trouble: The Case of Heberto Padilla," *New York Review of Books*, June 3, 1971; pp. 3-8.

[17] *Revolution in Cuba*, p. 448; *With Fidel*, p. 222.

[18] *Cuba in the 1970s*, p. 86.

[19] Dumont, *Is Cuba Socialist?*, p. 119. Matthews, *Revolution in Cuba*, p. 15.

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vigilance against counterrevolutionaries. In the center of each group sat a family wearing placards identifying them as the most revolutionary militants in their building. I did not detect any sense of joy or dedication but, rather, saw hundreds of people sitting around idly with bored expressions, perhaps annoyed that they had to endure this event after a full day's work. Here was another example of how the Revolution demands mass participation—but it could hardly be called an example of socialist democracy.

Yet, it is not impossible that Cuba might move toward autonomy and independence within a socialist framework. Normalization of relations with the United States might in the long run give Fidel Castro the option to slowly develop a more independent position, and perhaps even retreat from the present close association with Soviet policy. Just as Tito was able to maneuver and create an independent path for Yugoslavia, Cuba's developing economic growth, combined with detente, could give Castro the chance to shed some of the dogmatism that seems to have been dictated by the necessities of the Cuban-Soviet alliance. Cuba might yet, as Mesa-Lago suggests, be transformed from a "centralist-dogmatic and Soviet-dependent" system into a "more democratic and independent socialist system."[20]

There was a time when many foreign observers hoped that Cuba would become the model for a socialist society that could free its people from the old dependence on American corporations, and also remain free of Soviet domination, with a government that would be popular with all citizens.[21] It is probably too late for Cuba to remove itself completely from its close economic and political ties to the Soviet bloc. But within that reality, there is room for Cuba to show more flexibility. And for those who wish the best for the Cuban Revolution, it becomes indispensable, as Rene Dumont so aptly writes, to present "a more complete and different view from that of its officials and propagandists."[22] This means the propagandists on both sides of the abyss. Having endured years of distorted and inaccurate anti-Cuban polemics, it serves neither the interest of the Cuban Revolution nor that of *rapprochement* to replace an earlier hostility with an equally myopic view of the present. □

[20]*Cuba in the 1970s*, p. 137.

[21]Robert Scheer, "Why Kill Castro?" *New Times*, October 31, 1975, pp. 13-14.

[22]Dumont, *Is Cuba Socialist?*, p. 154.

Richard D. Alba

A New Look at the Mafia

THE MAFIA MYSTIQUE, by Dwight C. Smith, Jr. New York: Basic Books. 399 pp. $15.

When I told a friend that my Sicilian grandfather had died in jail, he asked without hesitation whether he had been killed by the Mafia because he "messed up." I had great difficulty in persuading him of a far less vivid reality: my grandfather was a poor immigrant storekeeper accused of buying goods stolen by other poor immigrants; he could not defend himself in court because he spoke no English and died in jail of pneumonia. My friend's question and the view of reality underlying it testify to the deep impression the Mafia has made on the American consciousness, and a most casual glance at the American media indeed will provide similar testimony.

The same depth of belief is shown by the 1967 Task Force Report of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice, which asserts that:

> today the core of organized crime in the United States consists of 24 groups operating as criminal cartels across the nation. Their membership is exclusively men of Italian descent, they are in frequent contact with each other, and their smooth functioning is insured by a national body of overseers.

Despite the apparent detail and confidence of this assertion, the evidence for it is slim. Aside from the hearsay and conjecture reported as fact by local and national law-enforcement officials, the major evidence for the existence of a nationwide organization of Italian-American criminals remain the Apalachin meeting of 1957 and the Valachi testimony of 1963-64. It is reasonable to expect that an organization would leave greater traces of its existence, especially in a quarter-century of close scrutiny, than we have here. But even these few purported traces, as Dwight Smith points out, are highly suspect. We do not know what happened at Apalachin, since the participants of that meeting refused to testify; moreover, the meeting and their silence can be understood without postulating a

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"gangland convention." In the case of Valachi, much of what he reported was gangland rumor and hearsay. His testimony is also suspect because it was given after he killed a man in prison and thus may have been motivated by a desire to please law-enforcement officials in order to avoid prosecution.

There has been a respectable opposition to the popular and official theories of the Mafia ever since Daniel Bell published his answer to the Kefauver hearings, "Crime as an American Way of Life." In the last few years, such writers as Gordon Hawkins, Francis Ianni, and Murray Kempton have raised damaging questions about the Mafia concept. To be sure, these authors accept the reality of Italian-American criminals and criminal gangs, with ties cemented by kinship and common origins. But they reject the notion that is at the heart of Mafia theories: that there is a secret, nationwide organization of Italian-American criminals distinguished by a strict and uniform code of behavior, a clear hierarchy of command with positions designated by titles, and centralized control invested in some person or set of people. In brief, they reject the belief in a bureaucracy of crime known as "the Mafia."

Nonetheless, despite a paucity of supporting evidence and a chorus of skeptical voices, that belief flourishes, suggesting that the phenomenon deserving study is not merely the structure of a criminal organization but the pervasiveness of belief in it. Perhaps it satisfies strong social needs despite the lack of supporting evidence.

Herein lies the importance of *The Mafia Mystique*. Smith turns his focus from arguments over the evidence for the existence of the Mafia to a concern with "the development of the image from outside the behavior pattern, not . . . the actions of the men to whom the image is imputed." Of course, in so doing, he cannot avoid comparing the image to the men and events it is intended to represent, but, mostly, his book is a history of the image. Smith divides its development into three distinct periods.

In the first period—roughly from 1890 to World War I—the image occurs as part of the xenophobic response to the arrival of the large number of so-called *new* immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe. This image was fed by a general perception of widespread crime among Italian immigrants and by two widely publicized incidents: the murders of the New Orleans superintendent of police David Hennessey, and of the New York City detective Joseph Petrosino.

In the second period—running roughly from World War I to 1950—the Mafia image seemed dormant. Nonetheless, this period is of great importance because it gave birth to other images that easily attached to the Mafia label. During this period the "gangster" and "racketeer" came into public view, confounded out of the reality of Prohibition bootleggers and their movie counterparts as portrayed by Edward G. Robinson and James Cagney. At about the same time, Thomas E. Dewey's investigations of New York rackets and the prosecution of Murder, Inc., popularized the notion of "organized crime."

The modern era began with the Kefauver hearings of the early 1950s. The Third Interim Report of the Kefauver Committee announced the existence of a "sinister criminal organization known as the Mafia operating throughout the country with ties in other nations." Still, the Mafia image did not take root until the Apalachin convention of 1957 gave a semblance of reality to an otherwise abstract notion. Valachi's testimony added a vivid portrait of a secret society, replete with organization charts, titles, and rites of initiation. The Task Force Report on Organized Crime, issued in 1967, stamped the image with the imprimatur of serious academic and intellectual analysis.

Last, but hardly least, *The Godfather* provided finishing touches of verisimilitude by its sympathetic portrait of Mafiosi and their social milieu. Smith is at his best in tracing the development of the image in this last era, especially in showing its often spontaneous and fortuitous evolution and the continual refashioning of evidence.

As a criminologist, Smith's analysis of the advocates of the Mafia theory is, not surprisingly, largely confined to the roles played by law-enforcement officials. He argues that some law-enforcement agencies seized upon the Mafia theory because it coincided with their interests. In the 1950s, the Federal Bureau of Narcotics became the chief advocate of the theory because it needed a strong and conspiratorial opponent to explain its failure of making progress in the struggle against narcotics. In the 1960s, the other law-enforcement agencies, such as Robert Kennedy's Justice Department, used the theory to arouse fears of a supercriminal organization as a way of justifying the use of wiretapping and other invasions of privacy.

Smith argues, however, that the Mafia theory has ultimately worked against the interests of these very law-enforcement agencies. The popular emphasis on the Mafia obscures the actual nature of

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organized crime. The Mafia theory assumes an absolute moral distinction between criminal and noncriminal and views crime as an alien intrusion. Ignoring the genesis of organized crime in the structure of American society, the Mafia theory spawns the illusion that it can be eliminated by the destruction of a small band.

IN AND OF ITSELF, Smith's book is excellent, carried out with thoroughness, intelligence, and a sense of humor; but it is only half the story. Smith satisfactorily explains the forces that shaped the theory and its attractions for law-enforcement bureaucracies, but he does not explain why the theory took such deep root in the American consciousness. Why is the Mafia theory so universally attractive? What social needs does it satisfy?

Obviously, those questions cannot be fully answered here, but I can point to the foremost element in any answer: namely, ethnicity. The importance of ethnicity for the Mafia phenomenon is often obscured by the defensive *pas de deux* between Italian-American groups and law-enforcement officials in which each seeks to deny the meaningfulness of its ethnic character. In fact, ethnicity is crucial for the Mafia belief. Look only at the ease with which the accusation of Mafioso is made against prominent Italian-Americans such as Joseph Alioto and Frank Sinatra, the public readiness to believe it, and the difficulty these men experience in shedding the label once it is applied.

I think it correct to see the Mafia phenomenon as akin to 19th-century nativism and Know-Nothingism. Ethnicity is used as a way of imputing degrees of social respect, a way of marking the boundaries of a "status group," in a society in which positions of power and privilege have been assaulted by successive waves of immigrants and their descendants. The Mafia theory, like nativist ideologies, is used to preserve the social honor of some and to destroy that of others. It helps resolve the question: to what extent does the mere fact of wealth entitle an outsider to general respect and access to power and privilege? In short, ethnicity becomes a *conservative* principle in the most fundamental sense, used to maintain domination and control of positions of privilege, to close the doors of the club to the newcomers because they are not honorable enough.

Closely allied to this use of ethnicity is the creation of myths that serve to legitimate the social order. The image of the Mafia forms part of a vulgar explanation of social inequality that absolves the powerful of responsibility. Like the legend of the Elders of Zion, the Mafia deflects blame onto a sinister alien conspiracy, thus legitimating the "native" social order. It is hardly accidental that many heroes of so-called black exploitation films war against the Mob, the Syndicate, and the Mafia. The established social order is not threatened, but strengthened, when the Mafia becomes the target of morally justified rage.

Another source of support for the Mafia theory stems indirectly from the use of ethnicity to define social honor. This use leads to archetypal images of social origins, normative biographies that deprive many descendants of 19th- and 20th-century immigrants of any feeling that their origins are legitimate by the society's standards. Their "dishonorable" descent encourages a view of themselves as interlopers and intruders. When socially mobile persons feel that their origins are not worthy of respect, there is a strong tendency for them to play down the significance of those origins or even to change their names. Except among Jews, the ethnic past is placed in a psychological limbo and denied any meaningful connection to the occupational present. But just as the repressed impulse is merely deflected and seeks satisfaction in an object that suitably disguises the original source, so the ethnic impulse seeks outlet in relishing the ethnicity of others: The ethnic joke is a functional parallel to humor in Freudian theory.

I believe that an understanding of the Mafia phenomenon requires that we reclaim the ethnic past. This task does not require us to weigh the

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claims of the Melting Pot against those of cultural pluralism or once again to identify ourselves as members of disparate and contending ethnic groups. It requires only that we understand our relationship to our own ethnic experience and that we place it in a position of normative equality to all other kinds of experience. If the Mafia image should serve as a device to start the process of reclamation, it will finally have served us well. □

Rose Laub Coser

A Conservative Critic of Affirmative Action

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION; ETHNIC INTENSITY AND PUBLIC POLICY, by Nathan Glazer. New York: Basic Books. 248 pp. $10.95.

Nathan Glazer is troubled by what he thinks is affirmative action, even though he concedes that "we have not quite reached the degraded condition of the Nuremberg laws." Yet, on a deeper level, he fears what affirmative action could be, namely a spur to a change in the class structure. His arguments against affirmative action procedures are weak; his stronger fears of potential long-range consequences emerge upon a careful reading.

Glazer's main thesis is that affirmative action—which requires a good-faith effort on the part of employers to increase the proportion of minorities and women among their employees and aims at integrating blacks in schools and in housing—threatens the American ideals of individualism and free choice and violates the principles of the American tradition.

Glazer admits that one could read American history as characterized by

> the enslavement of the Negro, anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic movements . . ., the maintenance of blacks in a subordinated and degraded position for a hundred years after the Civil War, . . . the restriction of immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe, the relocation of the Japanese and the near confiscation of their property, the resistance to school desegregation, etc. [But he thinks that] this is a selective misreading of American history; that the American polity has instead been defined by a steady expansion of the definition of those who may be included in it to the point where it now us all humanity; . . . that no one is now excluded from the broadest access to what the society makes possible.

Just when this happy moment has arrived it turns out, in Glazer's account, subordinate groups threaten, in their willful obtuseness, to demolish its foundation. "The threat of the last ten years to this distinctive American pattern" is that "the nation would, under pressure of those recently subordinated to inferior status [how recent?] be permanently sectioned on the basis of group membership and identification."

Glazer insists that among the three key characteristics of the distinctive American orientation to ethnic differences has been "first [that] the entire world would be allowed to enter the United States." Really, isn't this nonsense? Almost the entire world has been prevented from entering the U.S., because ever since the 1920s we have enacted immigration *quotas* that keep out all but infinitesimal numbers of people from other nations. Were it not for U.S. restrictive immigration policies, some of the millions who perished in the Holocaust could have been saved. It is impossible to understand anything about ethnic relations in the United States without acknowledging that what happens inside our borders is based on *quotas* of admission, and very small quotas at that.

But what about those who have managed to get in? They, we hear, have been enabled to compete with earlier settlers on an equal footing, especially since various antidiscrimination measures of the early '60s have removed the stigma suffered earlier. But this ignores that, whatever else it may be, ours is a class society. I really did not think that I would ever have to repeat Anatole France's old quip that the majesty of the law allows rich and poor alike the freedom to sleep under bridges; but Glazer, alas, forces one to recall ancient verities. To him, employment, schooling, housing, all have depended on individual choices until very recently, when—alas, says Glazer—the government introduced group criteria of access to these facilities. It is painful to have to recall the elementary fact that freedom of choice is *an unequally distributed*

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resource, based on the class, ethnic, and sex structures of society. The affluent have the freedom to send their children to private schools, but the great majority must "choose" class-typed neighborhood schools. Housing "choices" are determined by income, land value, rental value, and, in the case of public housing, by political decisions. Women "choose" sex-typed lower occupations because they are denied entry into the higher reaches of the occupational hierarchy, and a split labor market makes disproportionately high percentages of blacks and other minorities "choose" low-paid and menial occupations.

Glazer consistently ignores these and other constraints on free choice and gets nervous when, so he alleges, affirmative action legislation restricts the freedom of choice of employers and administrators to hire and place people according to their "individual merit." One must be naive indeed to believe that in the past it was just individual merit that landed huge numbers of Jews in the garment industry, and large numbers of Irish in the police force. What got them there was the presence of their cousins, nephews, uncles, landsmen and brothers-in-law who engaged in their own affirmative action. Many of the white male denizens of the faculty clubs got there in just about the same way.

WHAT GLAZER OPPOSES with strong feelings is a figment of his imagination: the belief that evaluation of results of hiring practices, or school placements, or housing policy is synonymous with setting quotas. Thus a statement of the Civil Rights Commission that if "racial and ethnic minorities are not purchasing homes . . . the marketing and sales techniques being used will warrant careful scrutiny," leads Glazer to the *non sequitur* that "one sees the process whereby affirmative action became goals and targets, and goals and targets became quotas." "One sees" nothing of the kind. There is no talk about quota whatsoever in the statement. He calls "ominous" (a term he uses repeatedly) the government guideline that "an affirmative action program is a set of specific and result-oriented procedures . . ." because he arbitrarily equates results and goals with quotas. If organizations were prevented from evaluating the results of their operations, they would come to a standstill. If the personnel policy of a university insists on a minimum of scholarly writing for faculty promotion, does this mean that a "quota" has been set for publication? If a surgeon is convicted for malpractice because he has an unusual amount of deaths on his record, does this mean that quotas are being introduced to measure the success or failure in the practice of medicine? A policy that does not evaluate results is a policy of irresponsibility.

Glazer claims that "evidence from the universities of illicit government insistence that quotas be set is overwhelming." His first piece of evidence comes from Sidney Hook who reported that a university president was told by a HEW official that "Department Heads should be advised that . . . other factors than mere technical qualifications" should be considered. Is this such a novel practice in academia (or elsewhere)? Could Glazer (or Sidney Hook) provide examples of employment for "technical" qualifications only? Are there not other factors, some legitimate and some not, that have *always* been considered essential for the welfare of a department or a school, one of which is its composition, variously defined?

In fact, there are numerical considerations in almost any policy, whether it is the ratio of tenured to nontenured faculty, or the ratio of different disciplines or fields. Not the least prevalent has been the policy to restrict the number of Jews, blacks, women, in fields that wished not to lose prestige through the addition of people thought of as having low status. If we oppose such restrictions—I guess this is what the quota scare is all about—it is time that the trend be reversed and that precisely people of low prestige, such as minorities and women, be not only accepted but actively recruited. As Ronald Dworkin has argued recently (*New York Review of Books,* Feb. 5, 1976), equity does not mean that people who have unequal needs be given the same thing: if, of two patients, one needs a larger dose of medicine than the other, this is what the sicker patient should get. Similarly, I argue that if some sections of the population need more effort on the part of the community for their rehabilitation, they are entitled to it.

This does not mean, as Glazer asserts, that requirements for qualifications are to be relaxed, and nowhere in the government guidelines is such a statement to be found. It is no accident that Glazer does not quote his "evidence" from these guidelines; he presents some pieces of hearsay that lowering of standards is being advocated, but these are usually personal interpretations. His examples could be used equally well as evidence of resistance to affirmative action by faculty and administrators. This is how I interpret the statements of some chairpersons of sociology departments that they

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"felt coerced to hire a woman or a minority member regardless of whether or not he or she was the best candidate for the job." This is also how I interpret the statement by a department chairperson that "at present we are authorized . . . to *interview* [emphasis added] only candidates from ethnic minorities." This is indeed how affirmative action hiring is often circumvented: memoranda are sent out, interviews conducted, advertisements placed—and all this provides accumulated proof of "good faith" (which is all the government requires). *Footnotes,* the bulletin of the American Sociological Association, reports in its February 1976 issue that the Executive Office has received hundreds of requests for the names of minority members and women eligible for recruitment and hiring, and adds that "some people are beginning to question the effectiveness and sincerity of such search efforts. . . ." I must hasten to add that of course not all administrators and faculty are devious. My point merely is that the statements Glazer quotes do not add up to any (let alone "overwhelming") evidence of "government insistence on quotas," whether "illicit" or not. They could be equally interpreted as willful or unwitting misperceptions.

I am surprised that Nathan Glazer, a professor at Harvard University—an institution that hires people, I am sure, for their professional qualifications—should have so little respect for or knowledge about standards of evidence. Nowhere in the book do we find some hard data about the results of affirmative action, so far. I realize that Glazer objects to evaluating results, yet I cannot but help noting that between 1972 and 1974, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education* for February 10, 1975, the proportion of women in faculty jobs throughout the country has increased from 22.3 to 24.1 percent, and that of full professors has increased from 9.8 to 10.3 percent. We know that for blacks there has been less progress. A strange sort of coercion that boasts of so little effectiveness!

Glazer knows that "voluntary action," which he advocates in housing and busing, works only "for relatively stable families," but that seems fine with him. What he is really concerned with is to uphold the present class and sex structure of the society. "The integration of blacks proceeds, and at a pace related to their rise in income and occupation level. . . . The integration of the poor is quite another matter. . . ." It is, indeed! Glazer reminds me of the contempt that New York City's established German Jews used to harbor against East European Jews who "chose" to live on the lower East Side. He fears the great unwashed and the monstrous regiment of women who threaten the established structure of society. Middle-class blacks are fine, but what about lower-class black female heads of family who do not share the Protestant Ethic?

> In our cities there is another problem, and that is the large, depressed section of the black population. It is not identical with the huge female-headed sector, or the welfare population, or the population out of which comes a disproportionate number of juvenile delinquents, the violent, and the disturbed. But the overlap among all these categories is substantial.
>
> [And further:] It is one thing to fight discrimination against the competent, the hard-working, and law-abiding; it is quite another to be asked to fight discrimination against the less competent or incompetent and criminally inclined.

Glazer does not seem to have read Daniel Bell's famous paper showing that crime was always strong among new immigrants, whether they be Irish, Italian, or Jews. He goes so far as to deny criminals their civil liberties, to deny jobs to those who were convicted in the past. He is indignant about the ruling of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which states that "It is arbitrary and therefore unnecessary to treat all 'serious' convictions as being equally predictive of future employment. . .," which to anyone concerned with civil liberties sounds timid indeed. Glazer assumes it to be obvious that once a criminal always a criminal, whether or not he has purged himself of the crime after being convicted.

One of the things I find remarkable about affirmative action is not just that it is supposed to provide individuals with opportunities that have been denied in the past, but that it could potentially (if effective, that is) bring about some structural changes in the society. This could happen through a change in residential (and therefore educational) class stratification and through a decrease in the power of "old-boy" networks in employment. The concept of affirmative action has awakened public consciousness to the social reality that inequality is rooted in social institutions to protect the privileged, rather than merely in the hearts and heads of men and women. And it is for these reasons, I submit, that affirmative action is being resisted in some sectors of the population, and that its specter haunts the author of this book. □

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